Transit Of Venus

for flute(s)

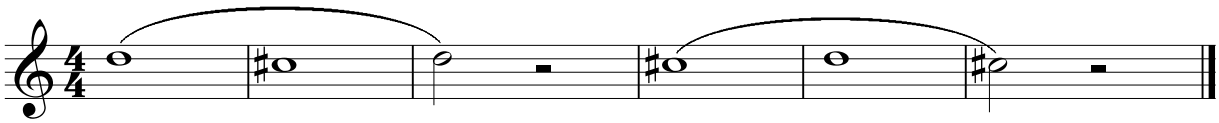
John Wesley Barker

2004

Transit Exercise

David Cubbin

flute



"Aim to match the timbre of each note using the natrual timbre of one or the other."

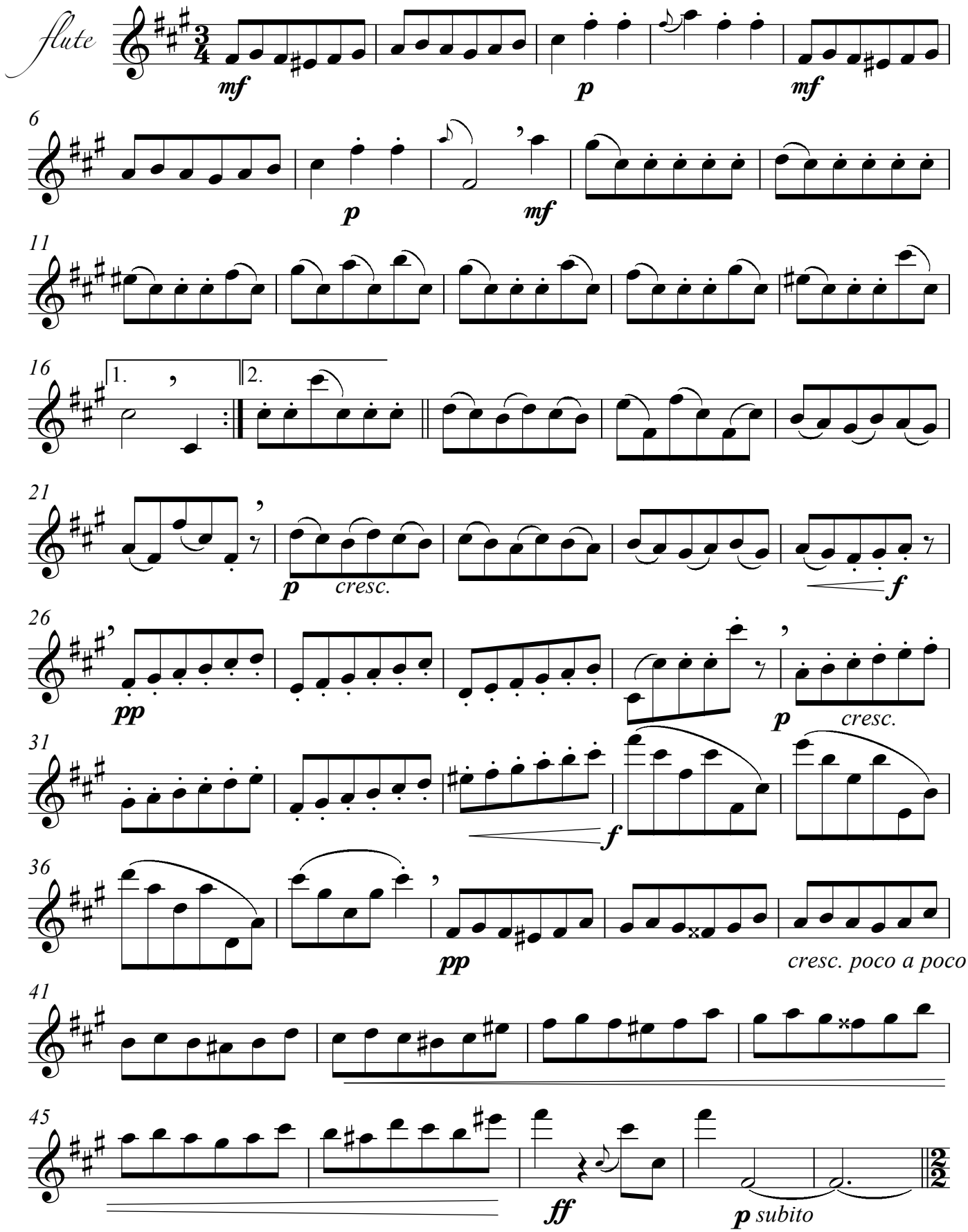
Transit Of Venus

study for flute

John Wesley Barker

Vivace ♩. = 72

flute



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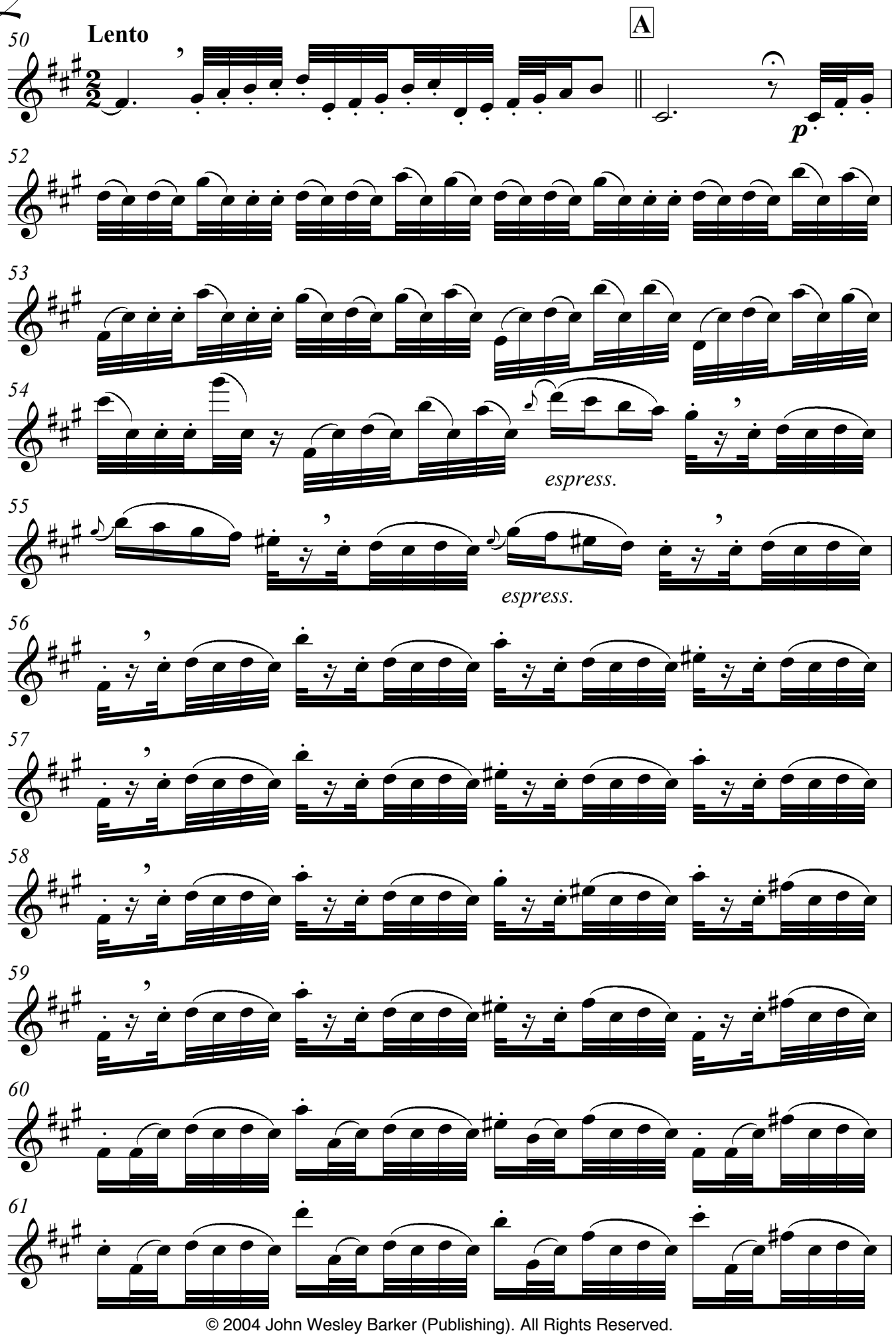

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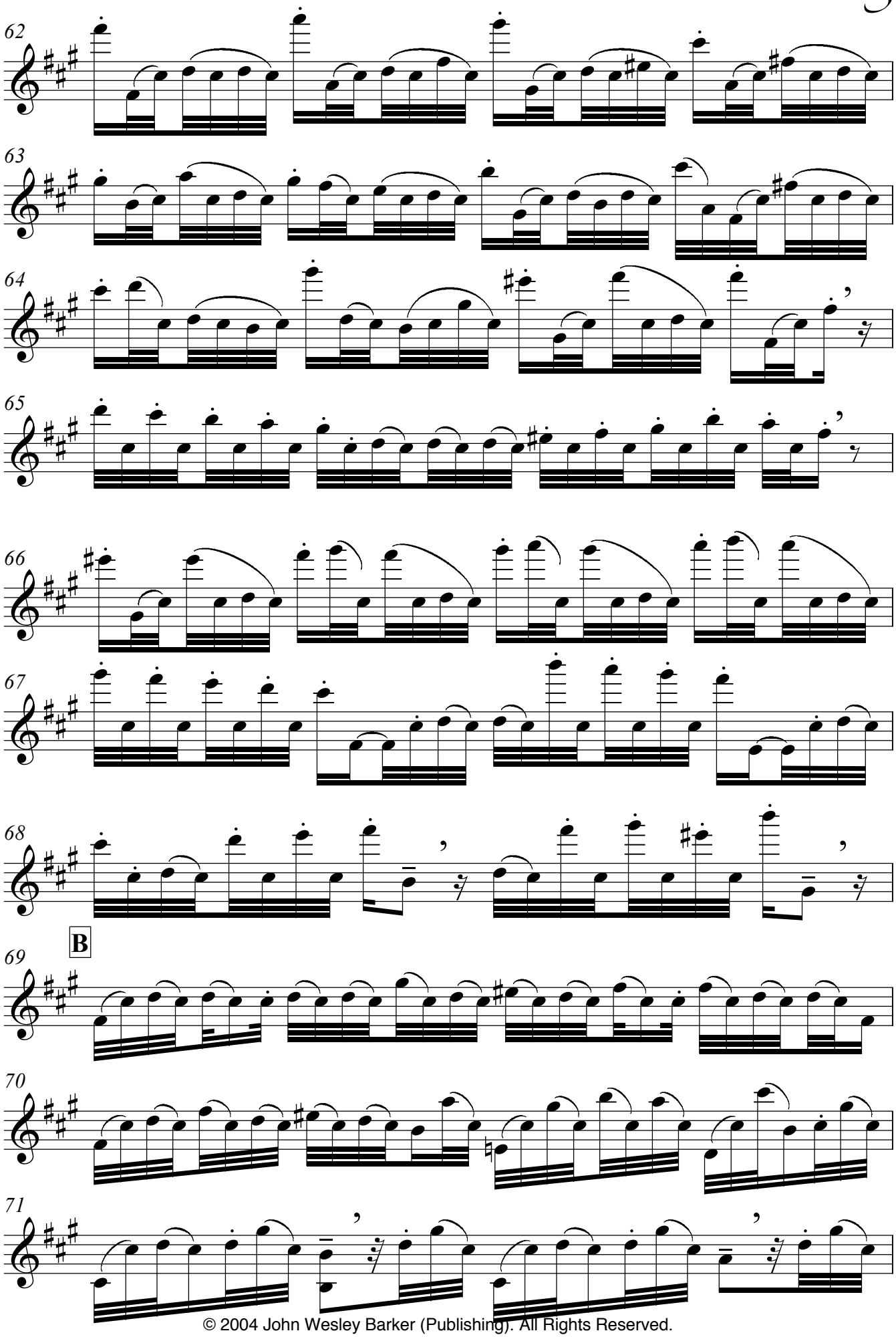

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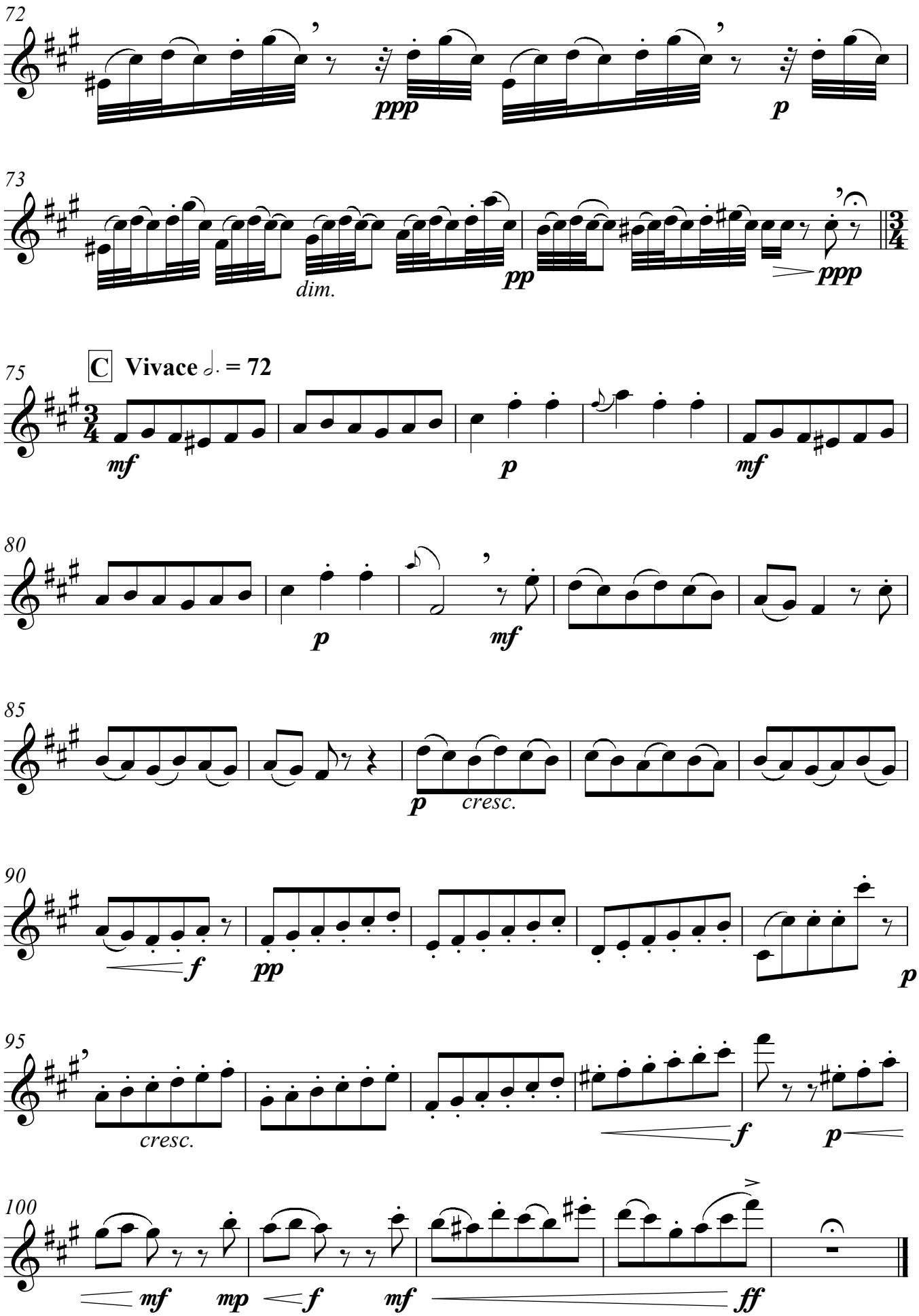

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Transit Of Venus 2

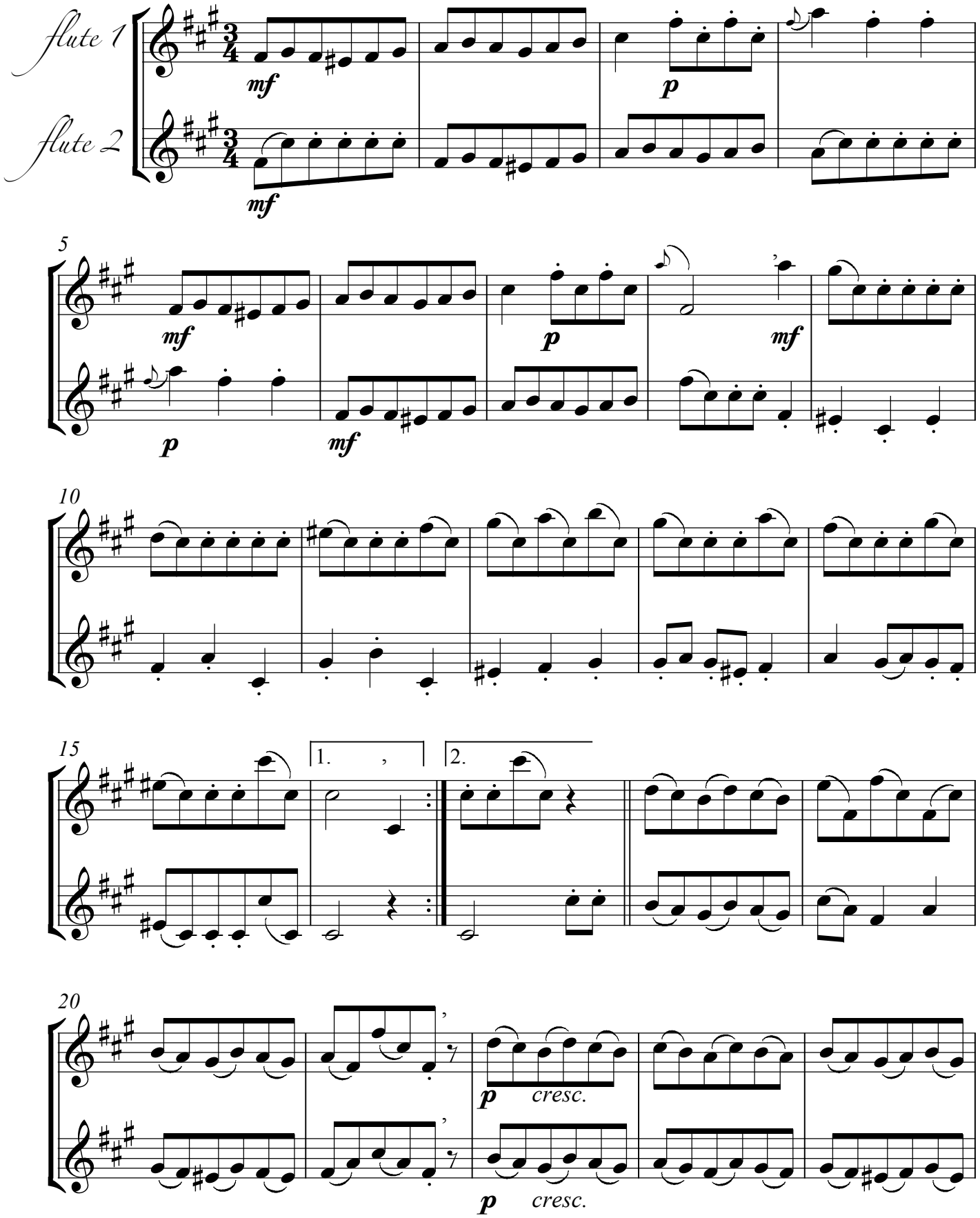
flute duet

John Wesley Barker

Vivace ♩. = 72

flute 1

flute 2



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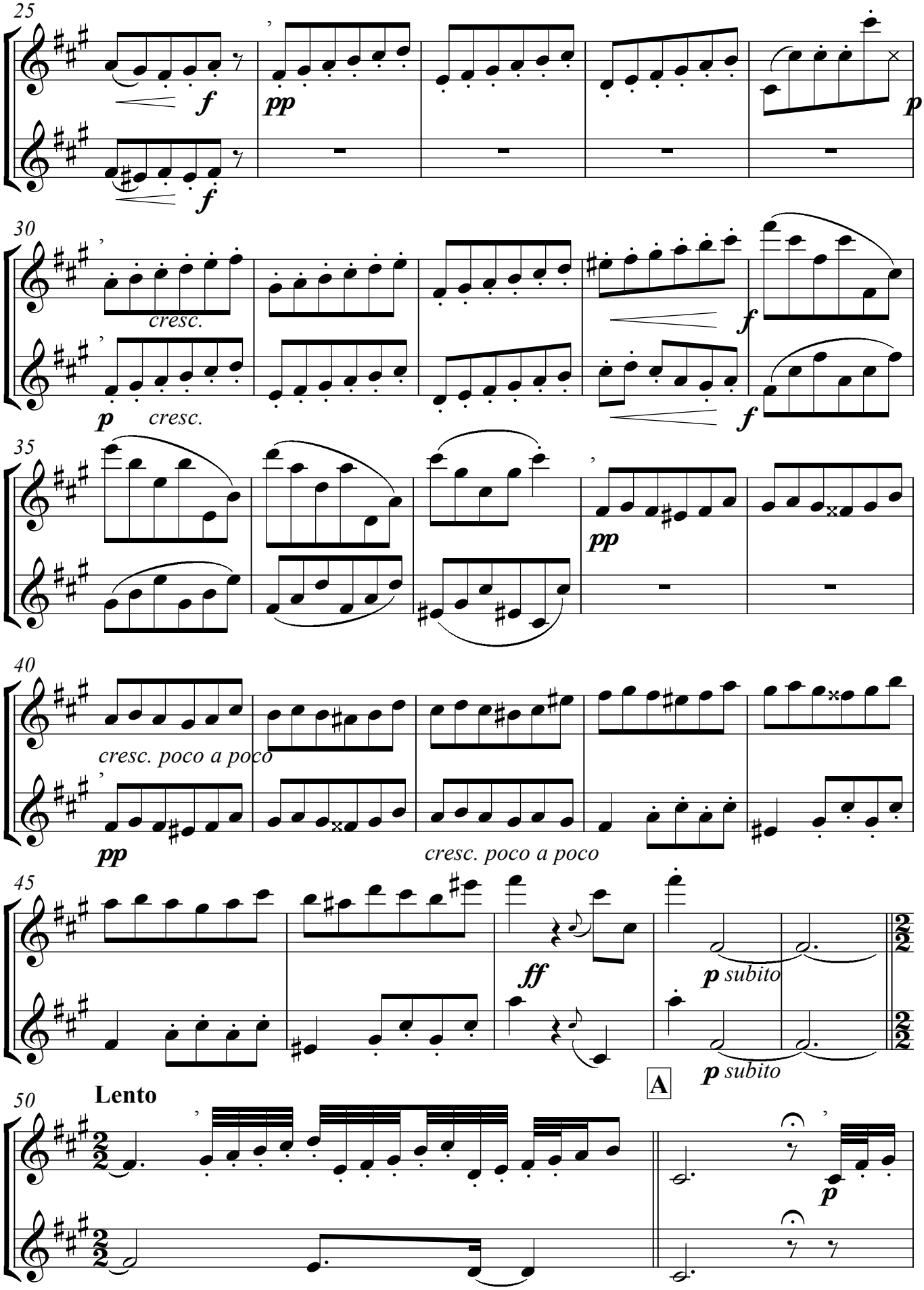

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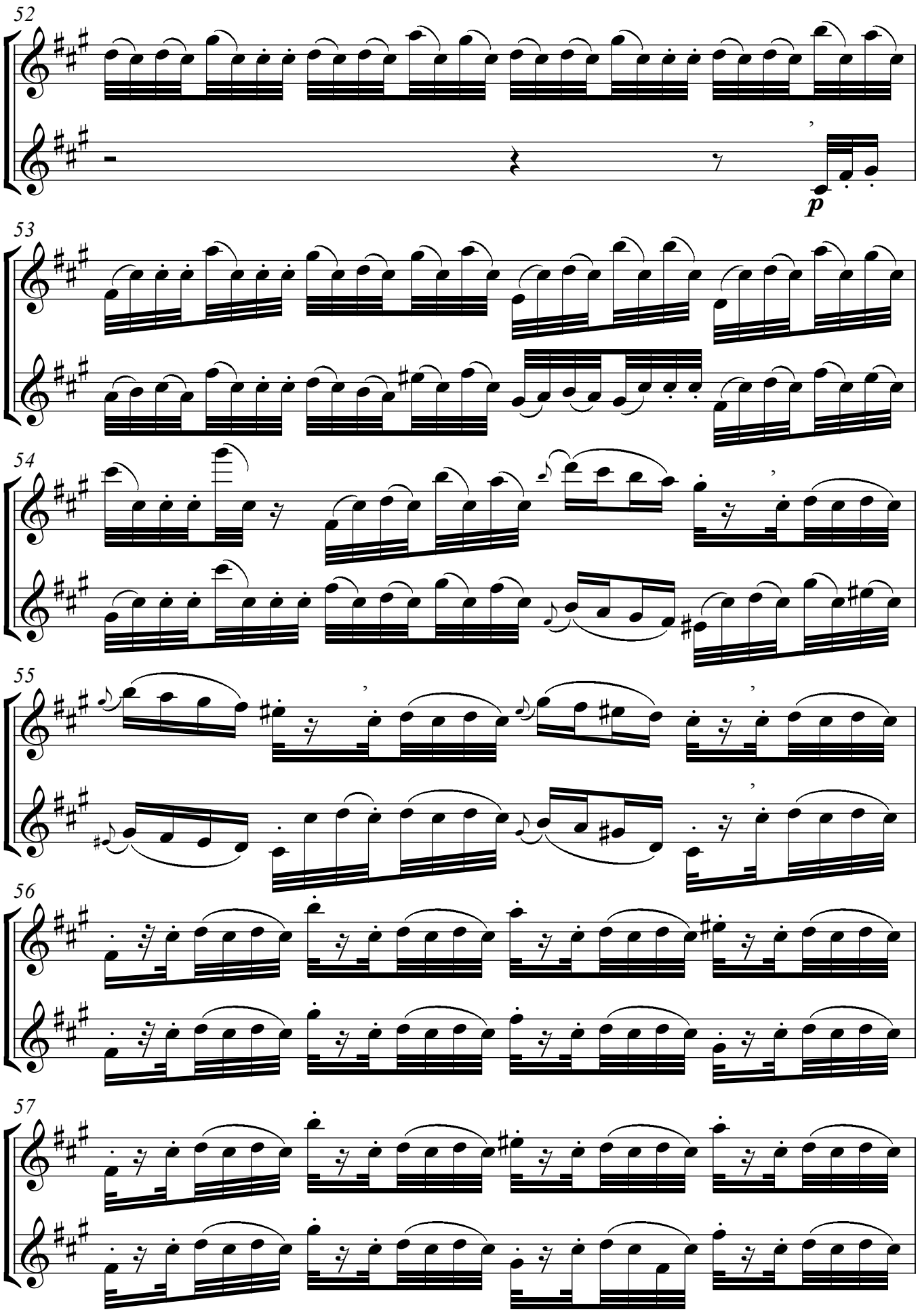

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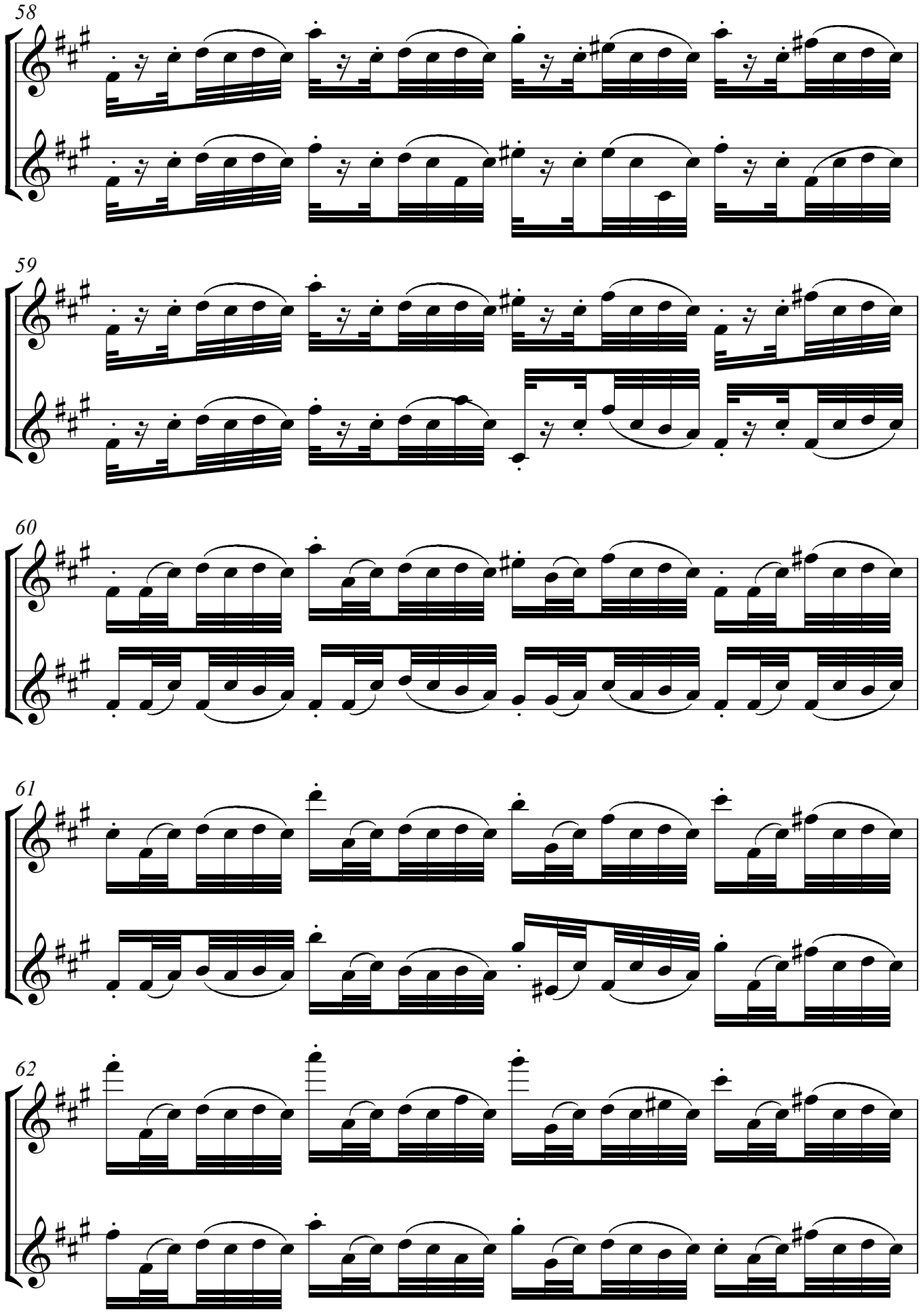

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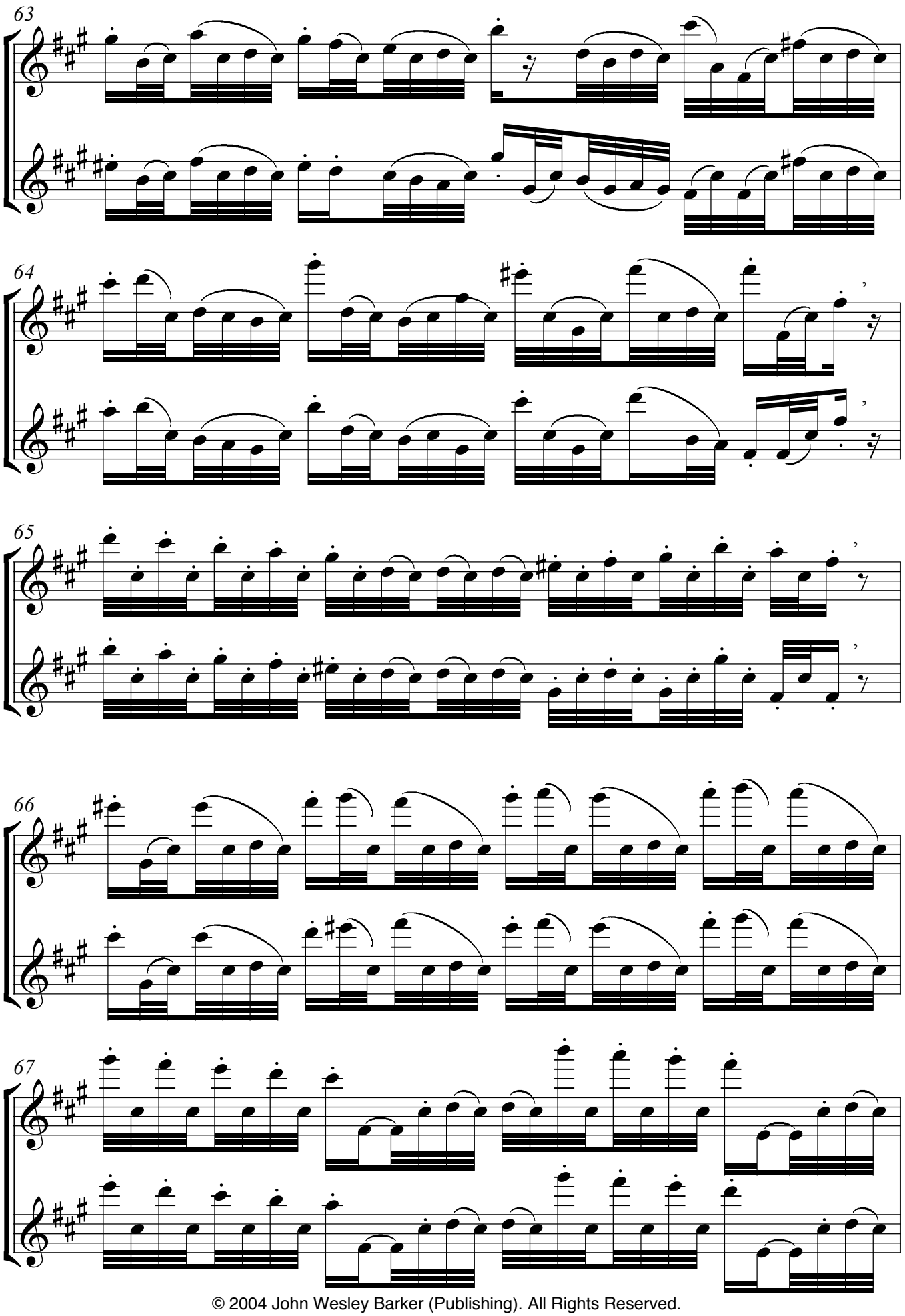

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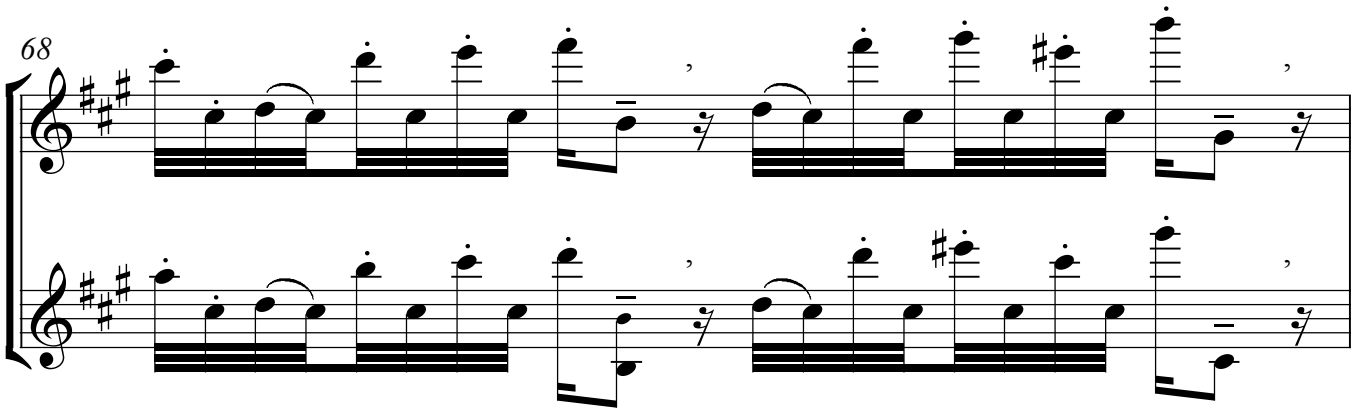

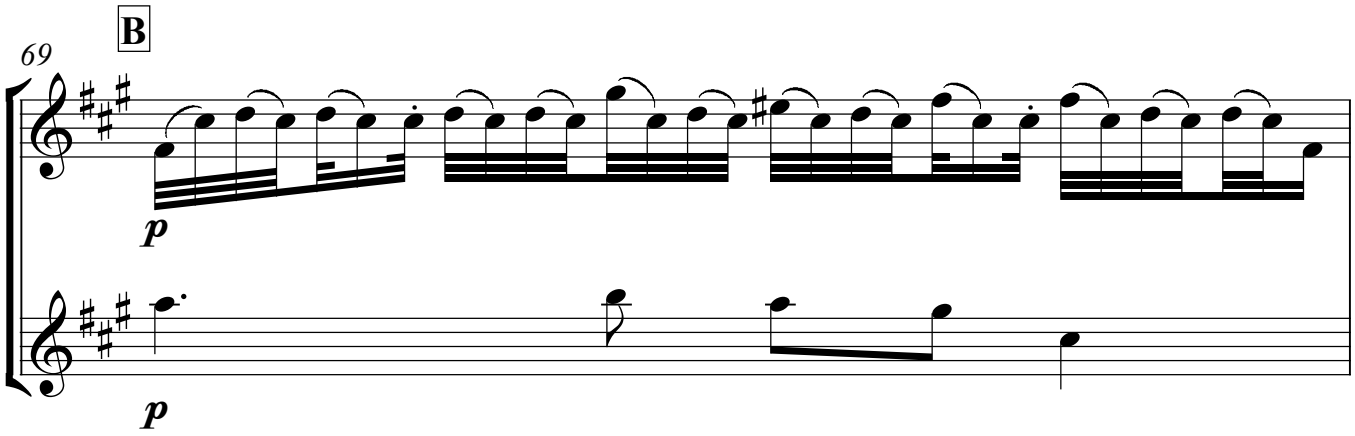

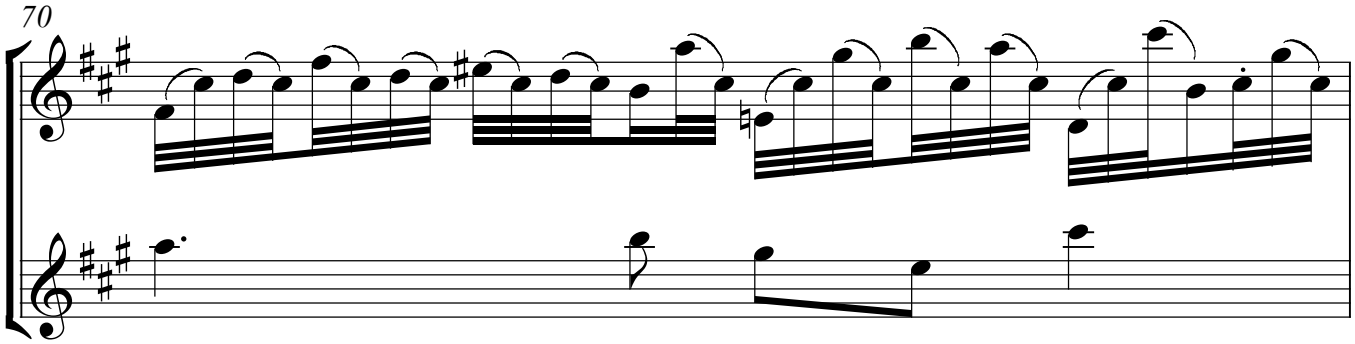

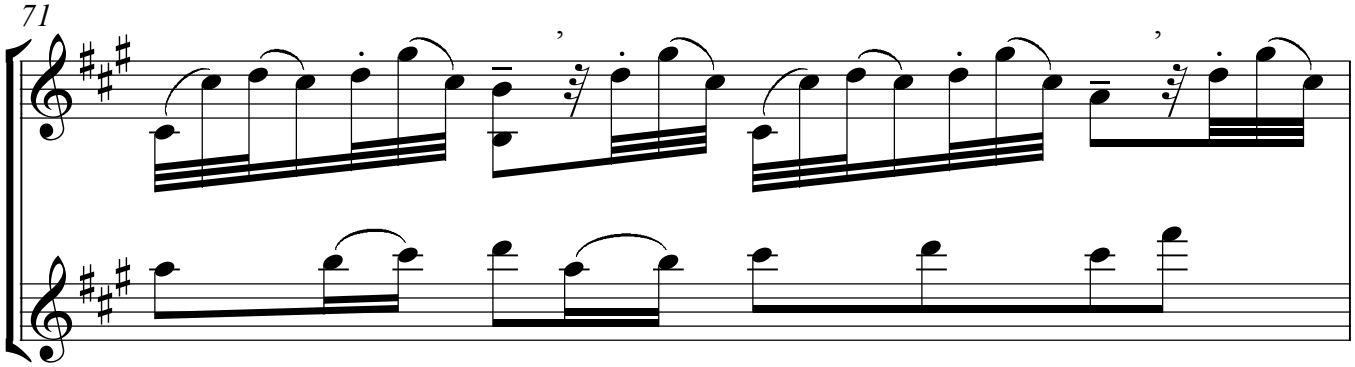

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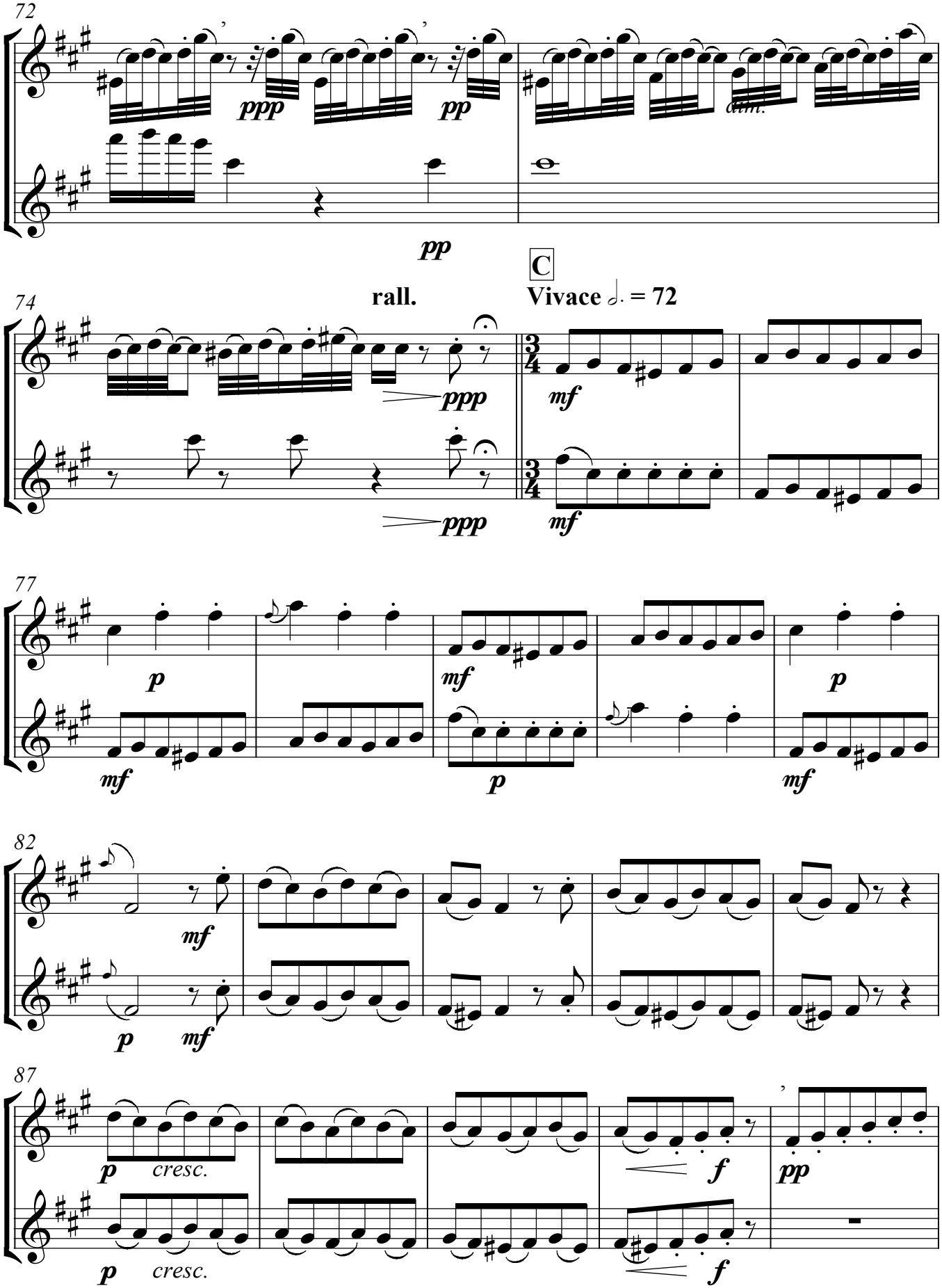

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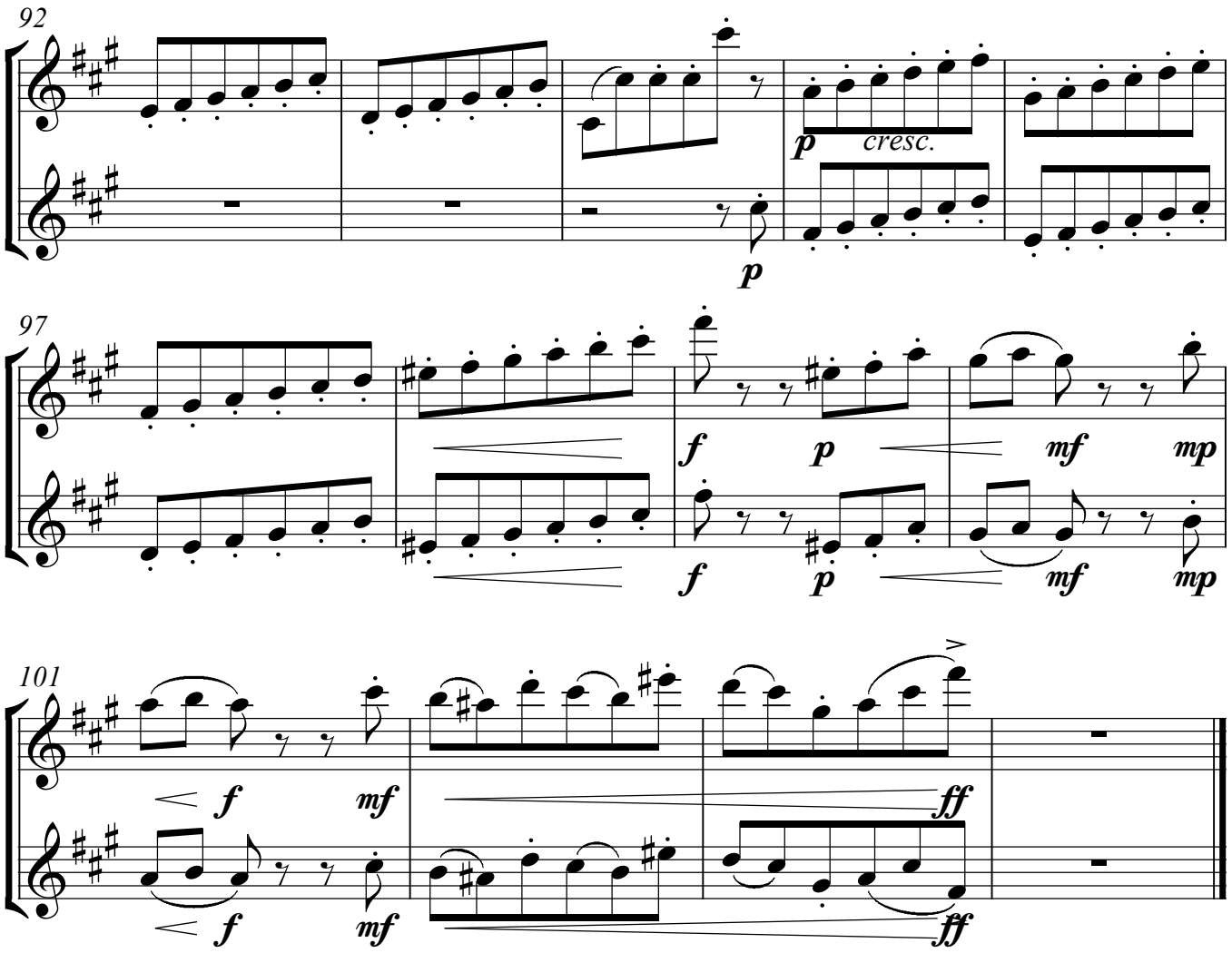

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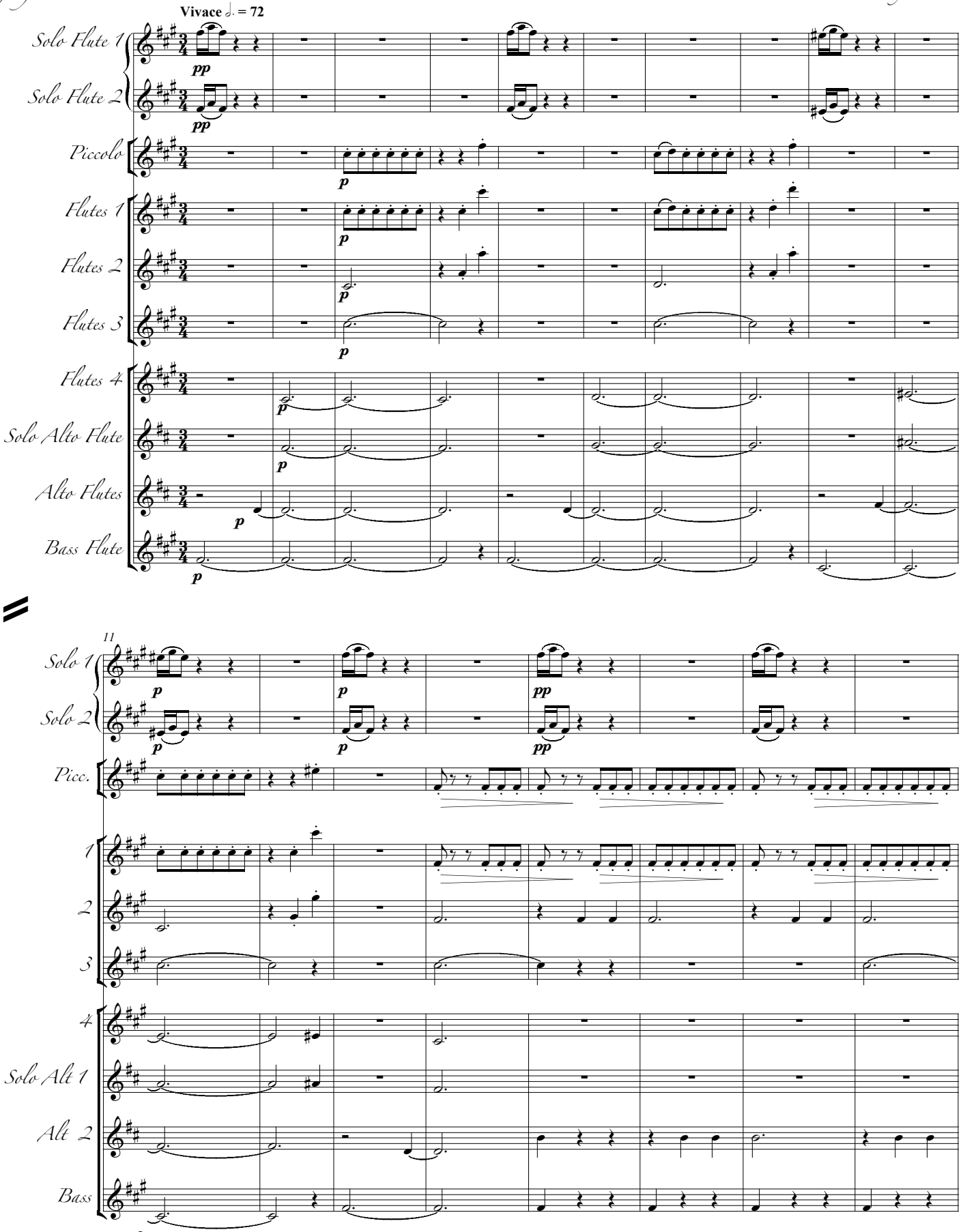
Transit Of Venus 3

to David Cubbin

for flute choir 3'58"

John Wesley Barker



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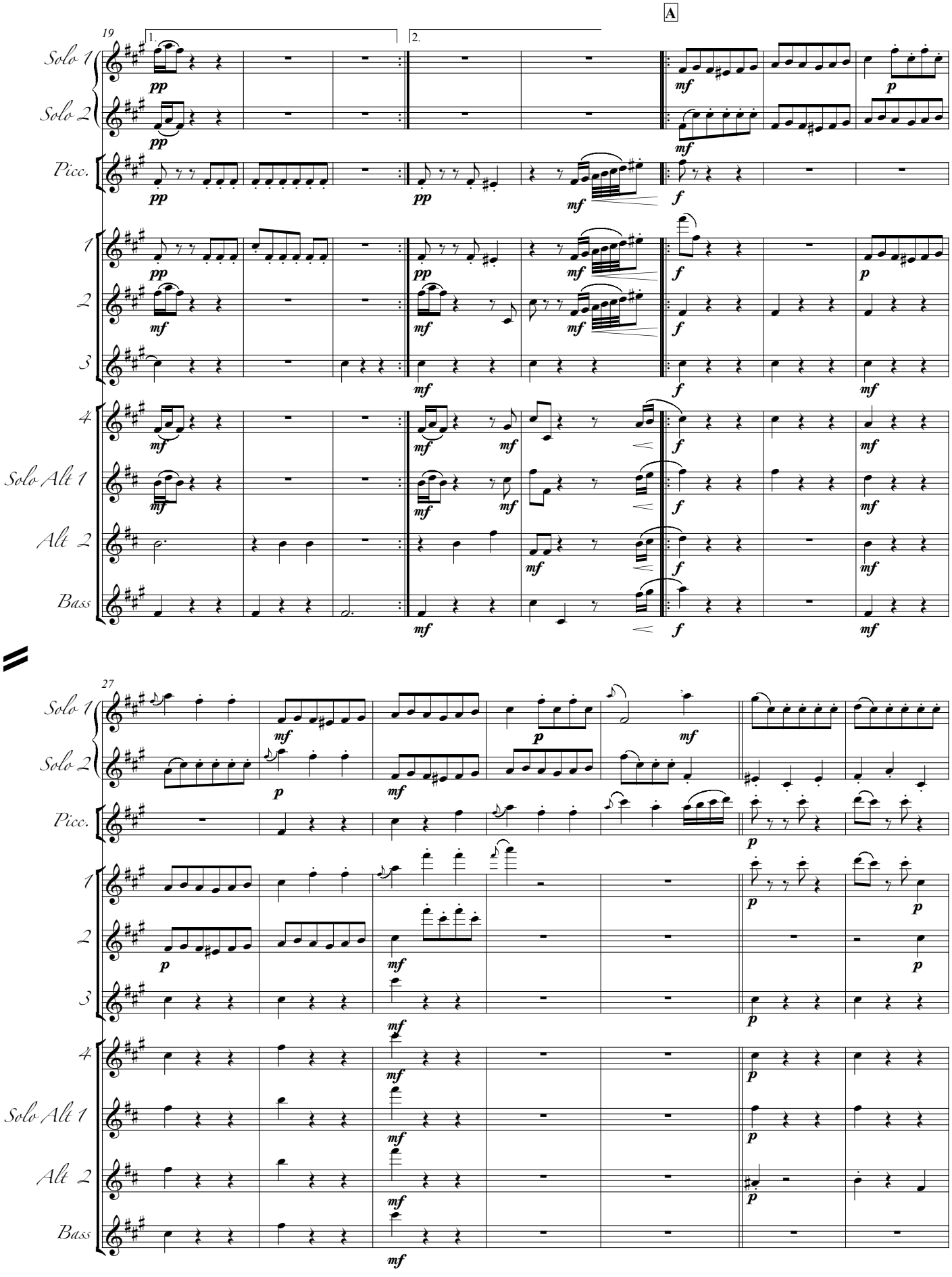
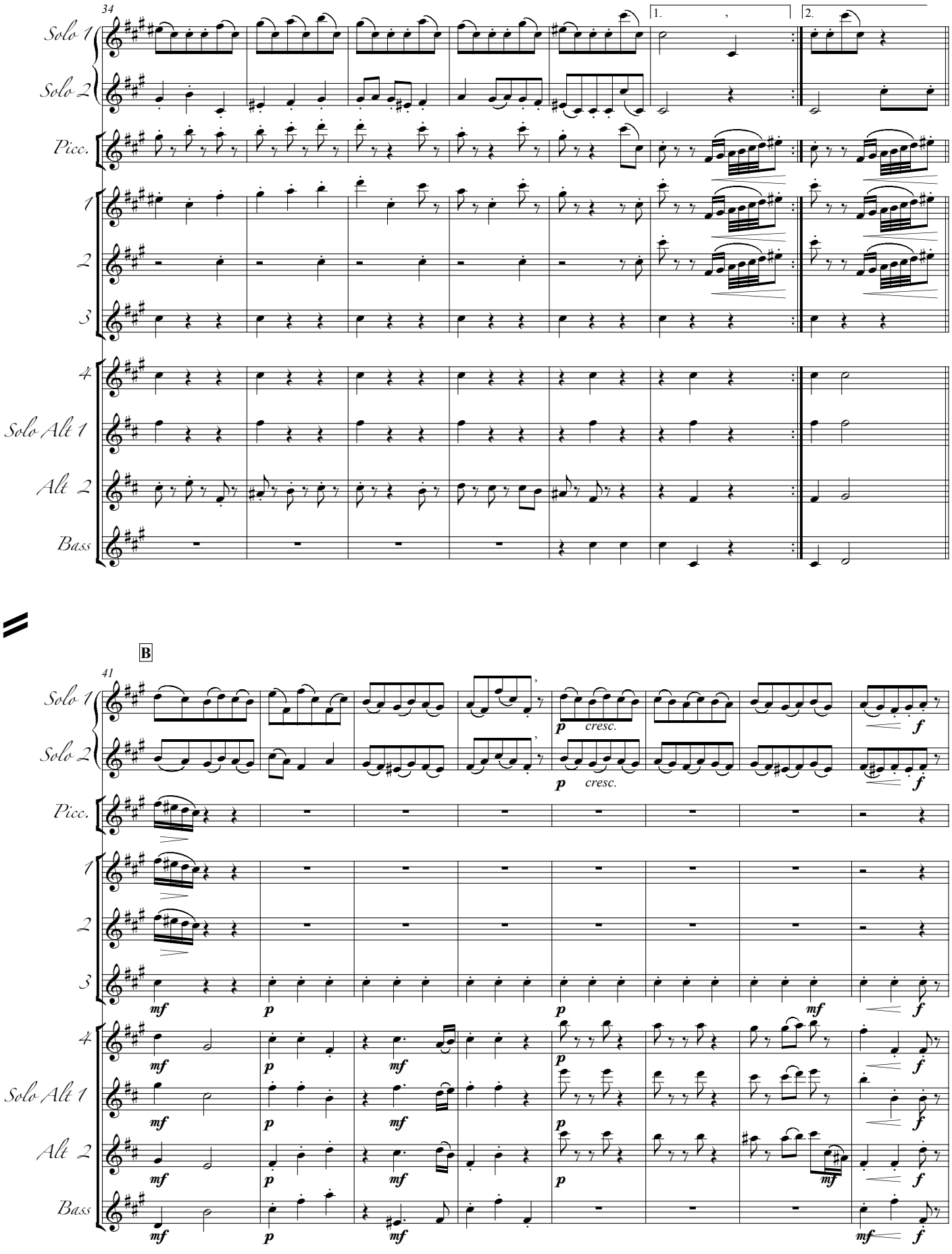
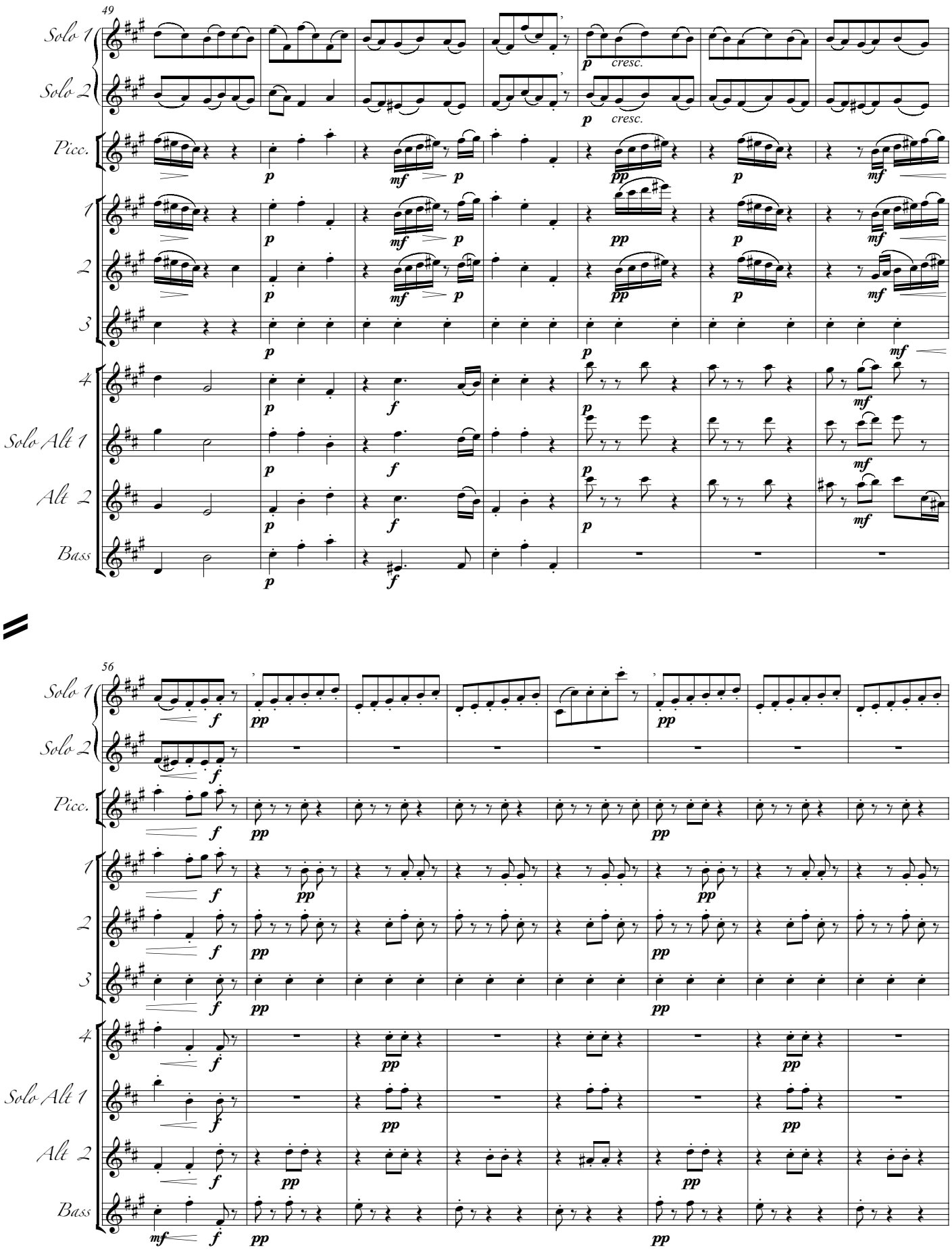
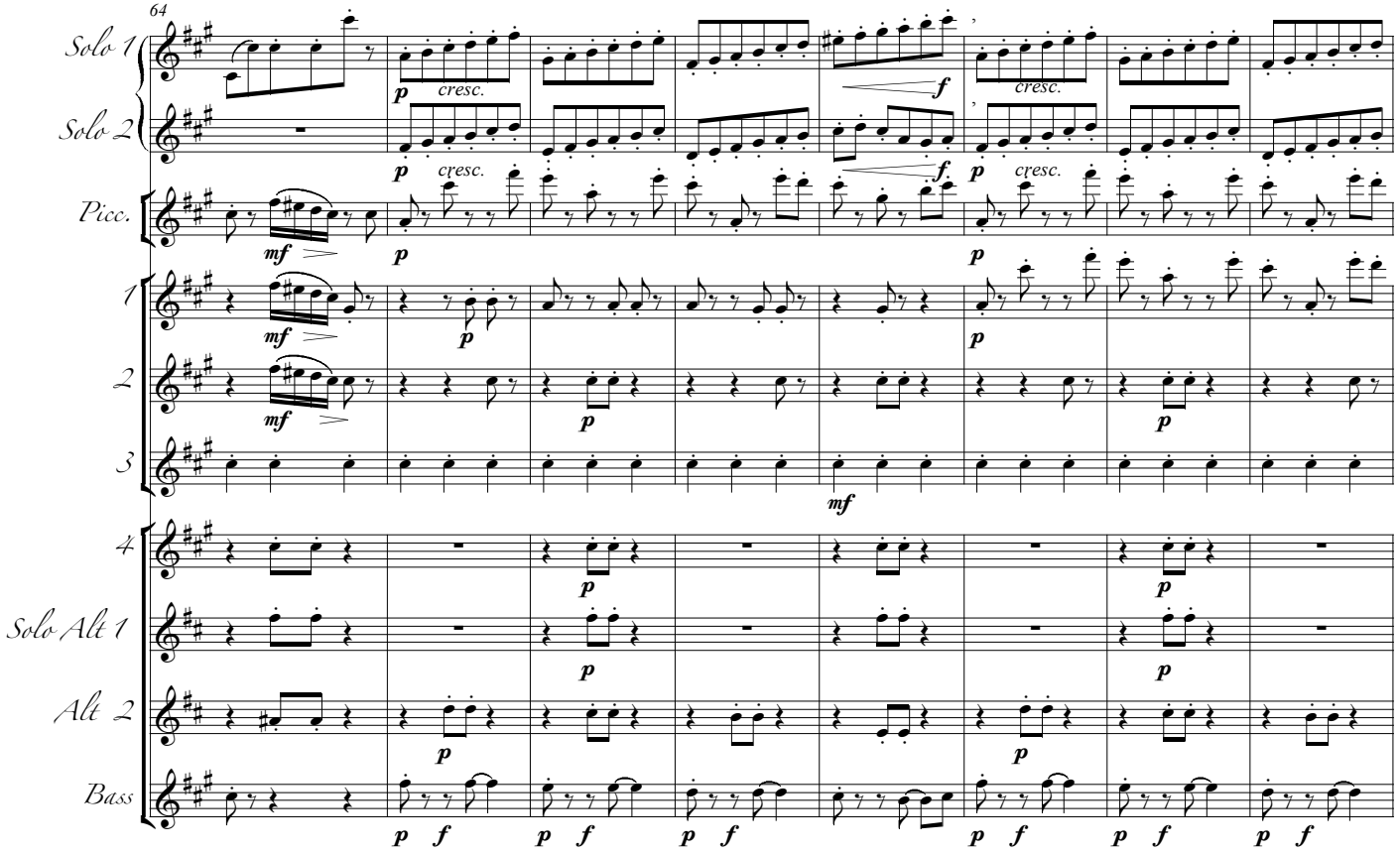
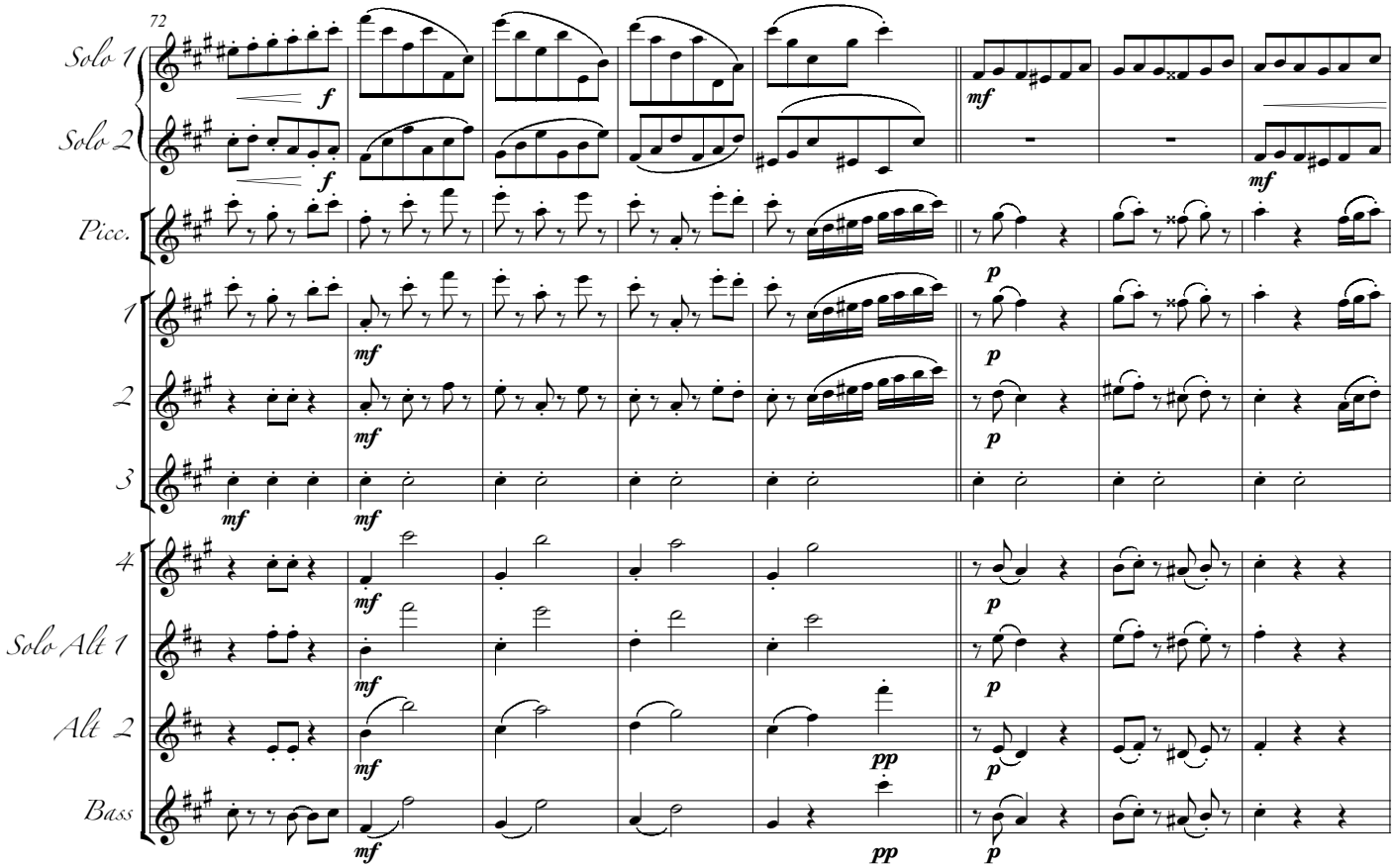
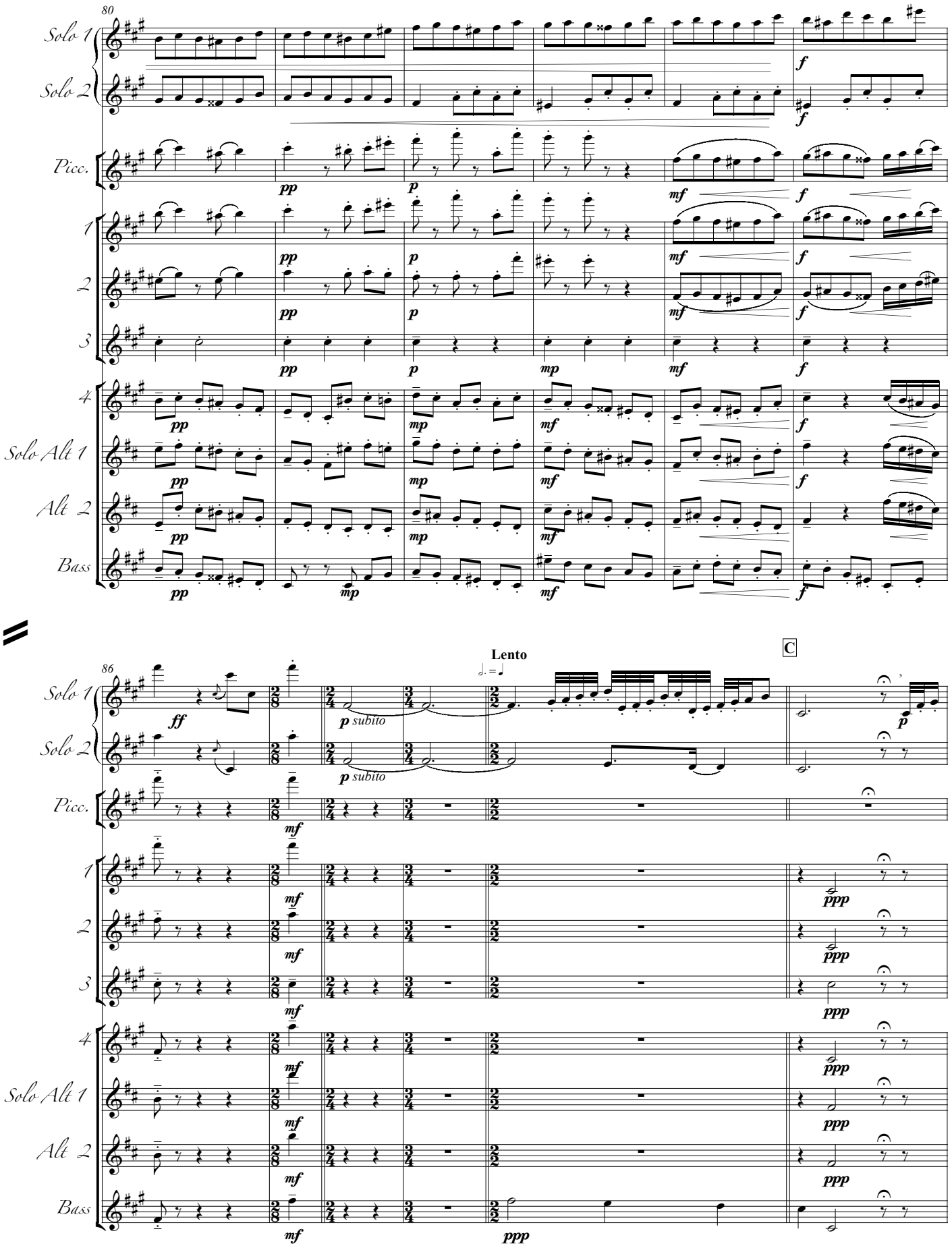

19
1.
2.
A
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass
27

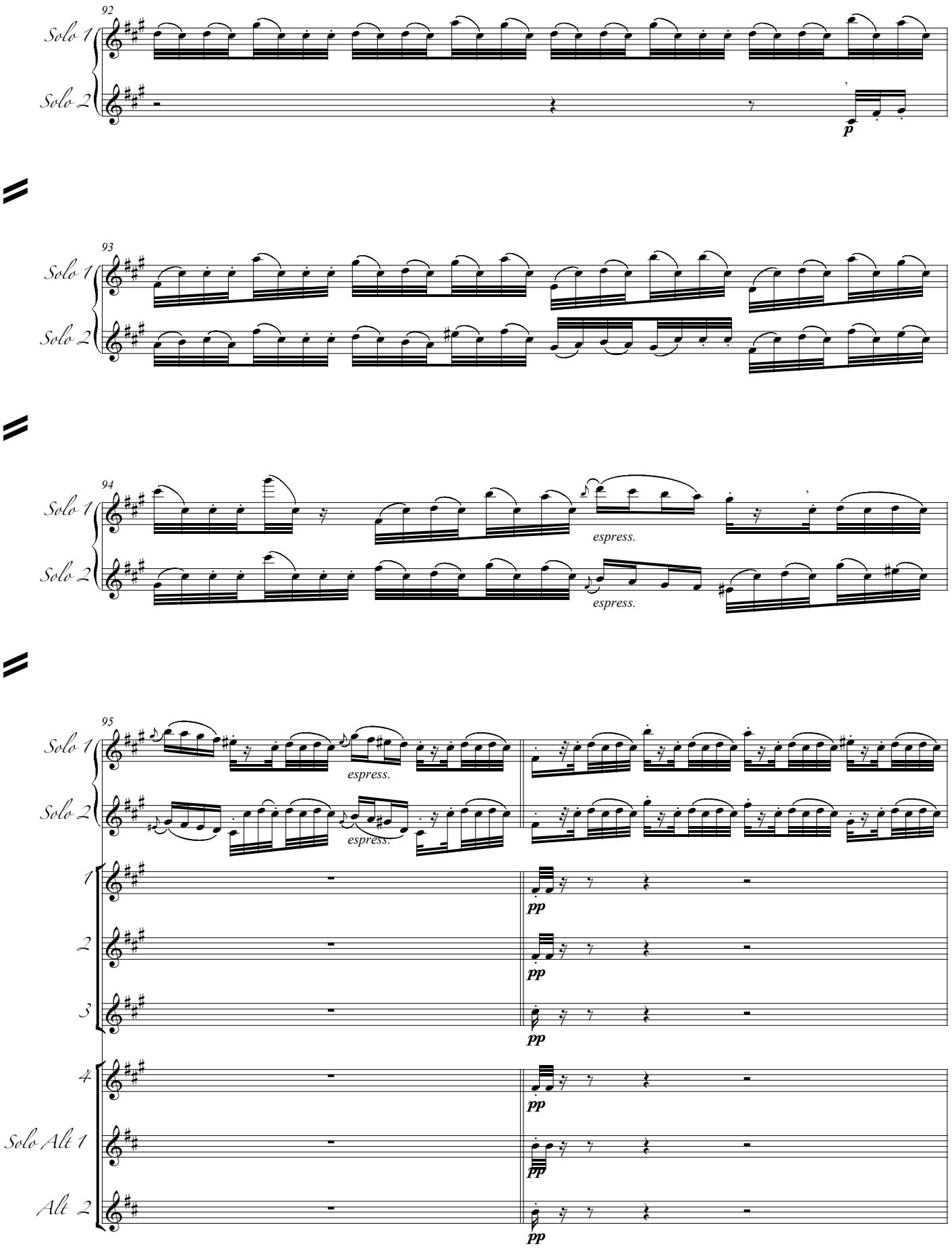

34
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass
1.
2.
B
41
cresc.
cresc.
p
f
mf

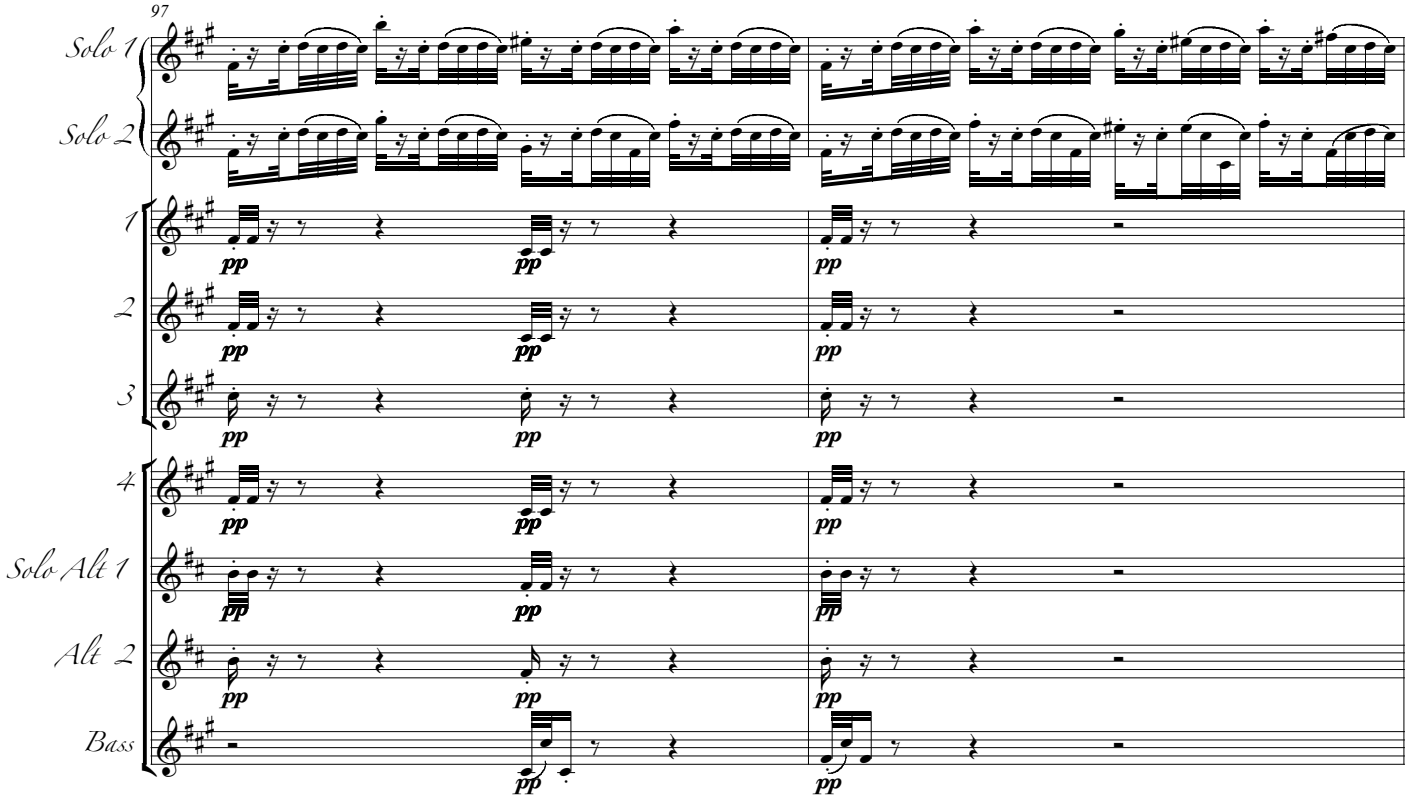

49
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass
56
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass

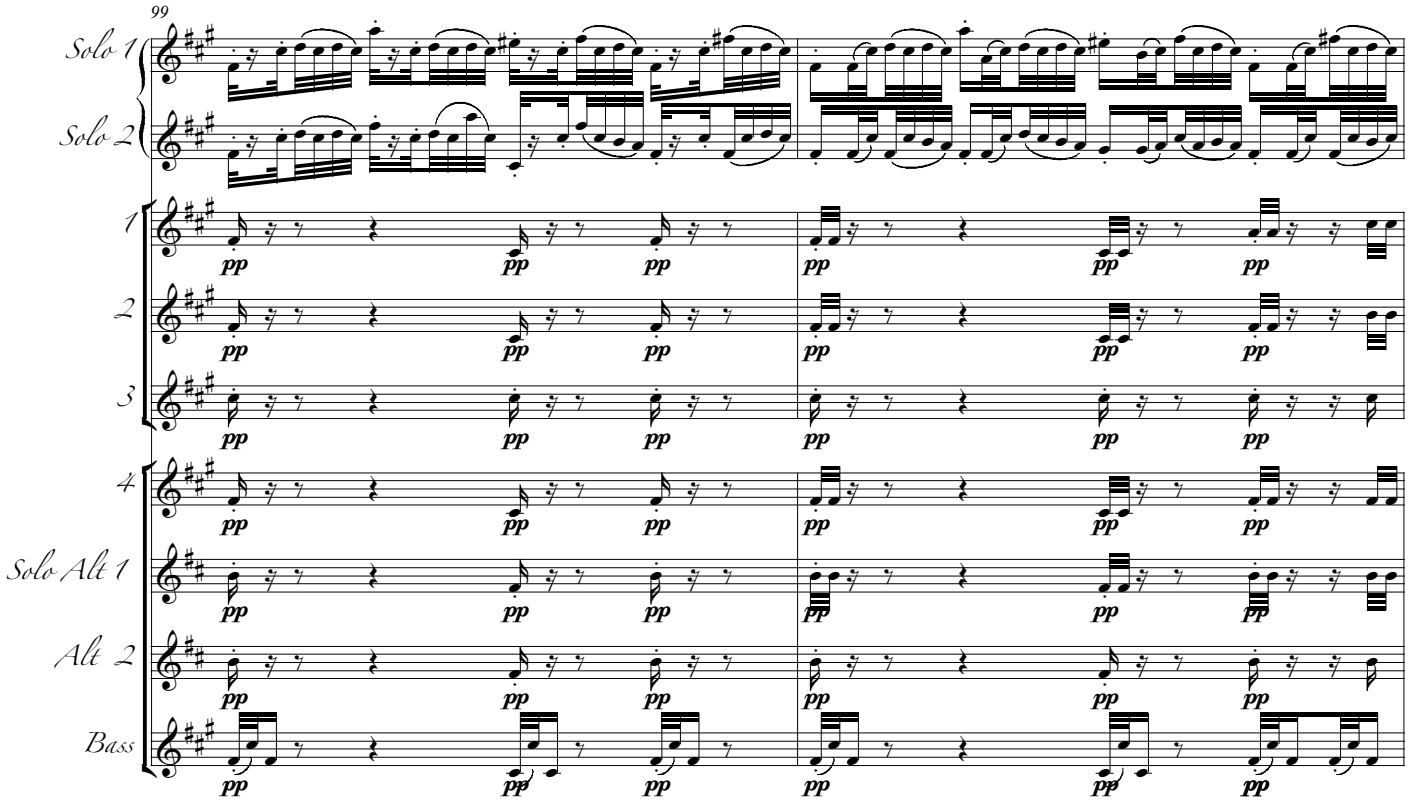

64
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass
cresc.
mf
p
f

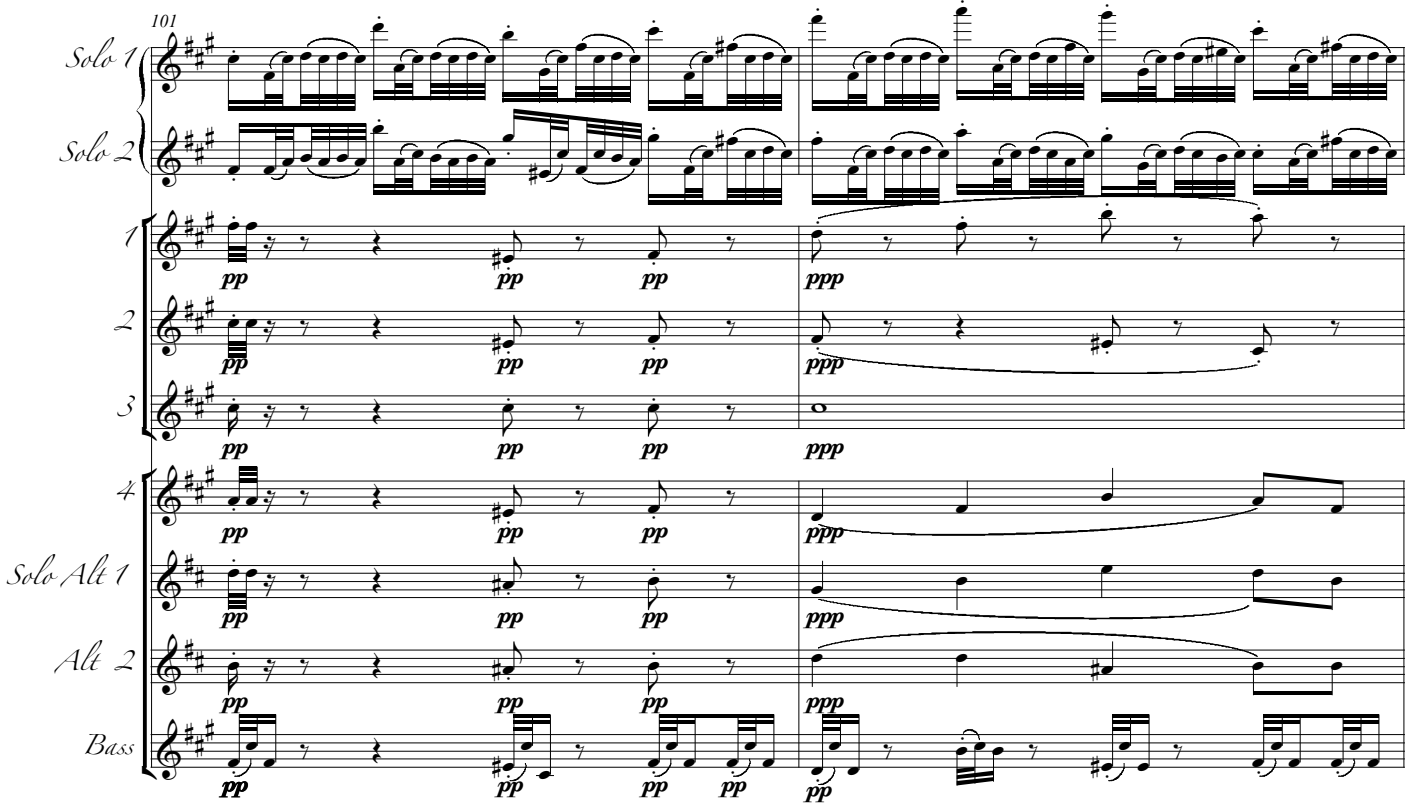

72
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass
mf
p
pp

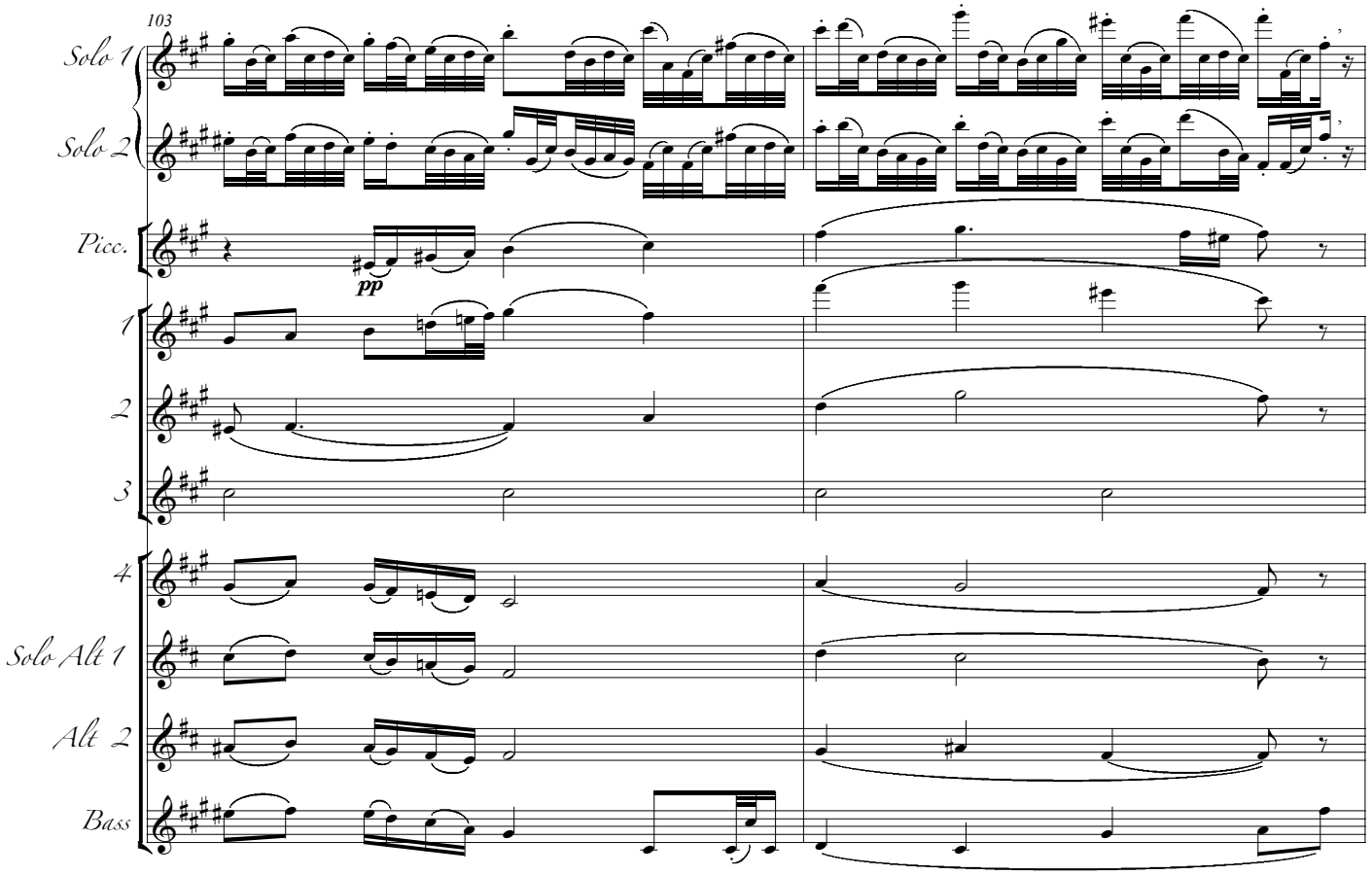

80
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass
86
Lento
C
p subito
ppp

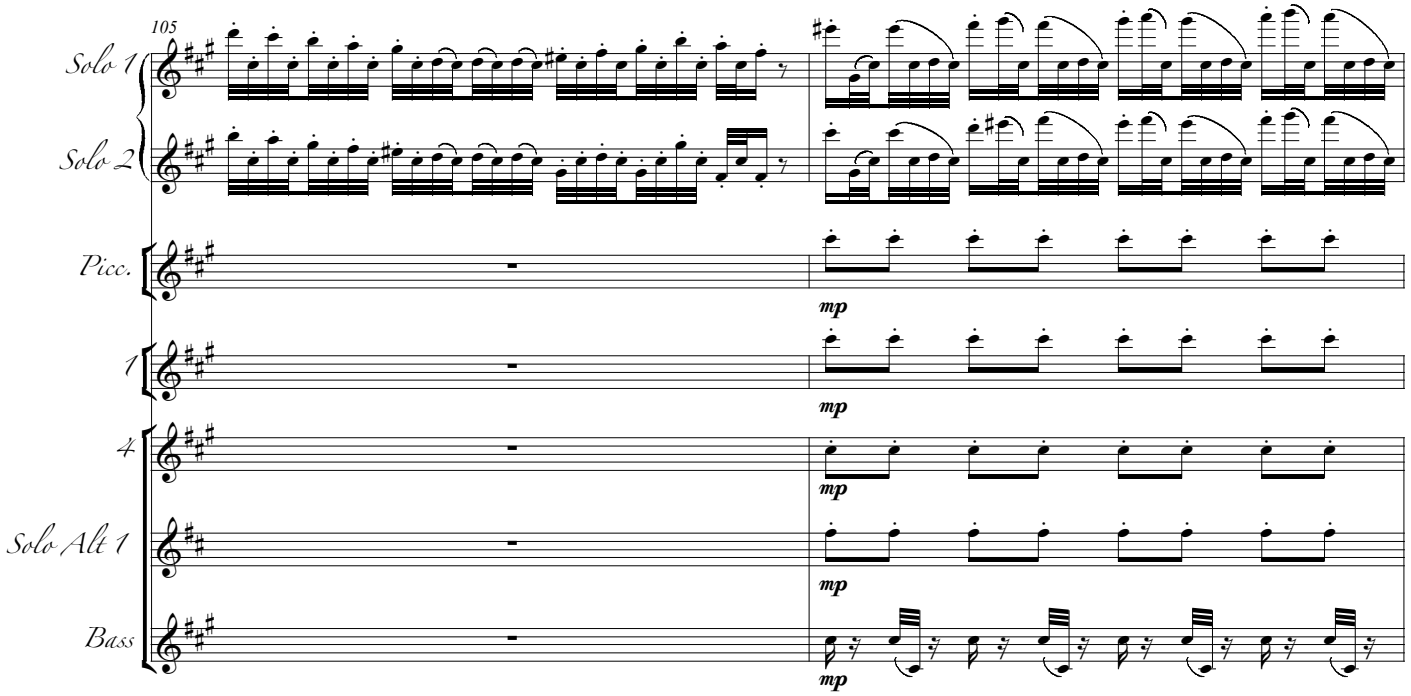

92
Solo 1
Solo 2
p
93
Solo 1
Solo 2
94
Solo 1
Solo 2
espress.
espress.
95
Solo 1
Solo 2
espress.
espress.
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp

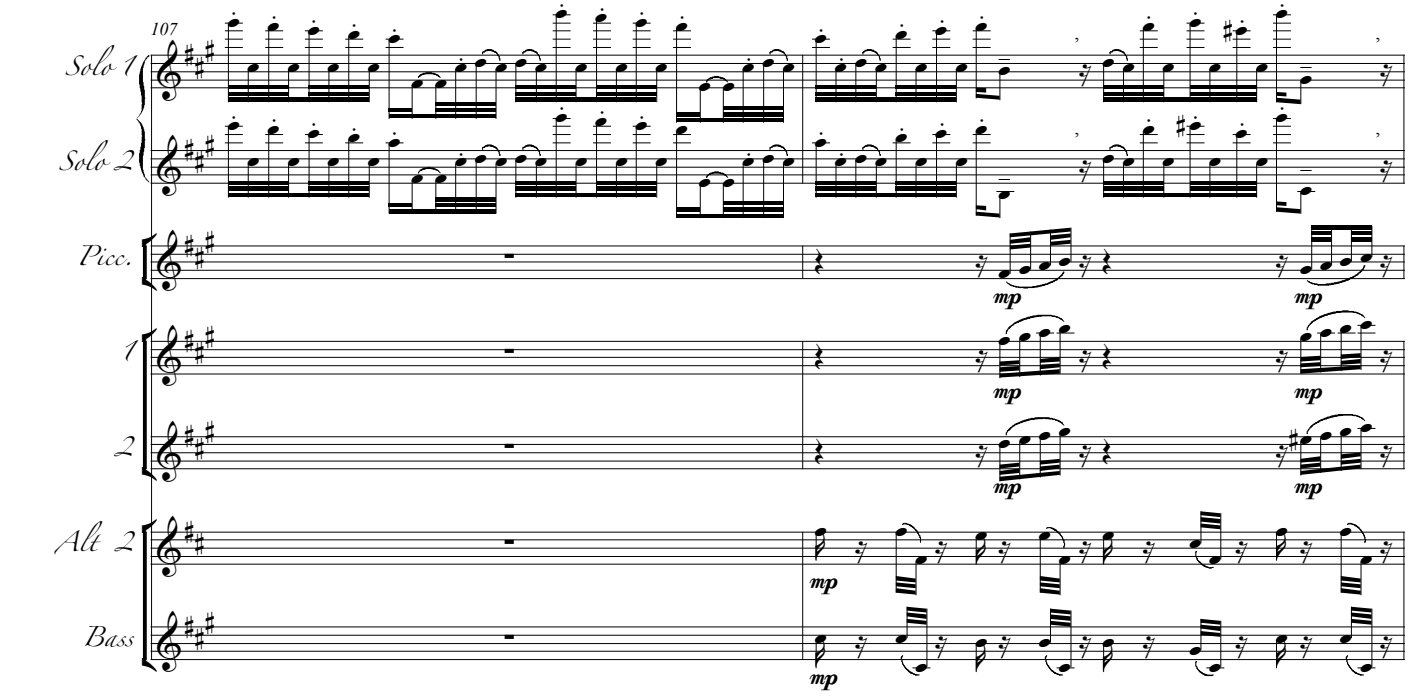

97
Solo 1
Solo 2
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass
pp

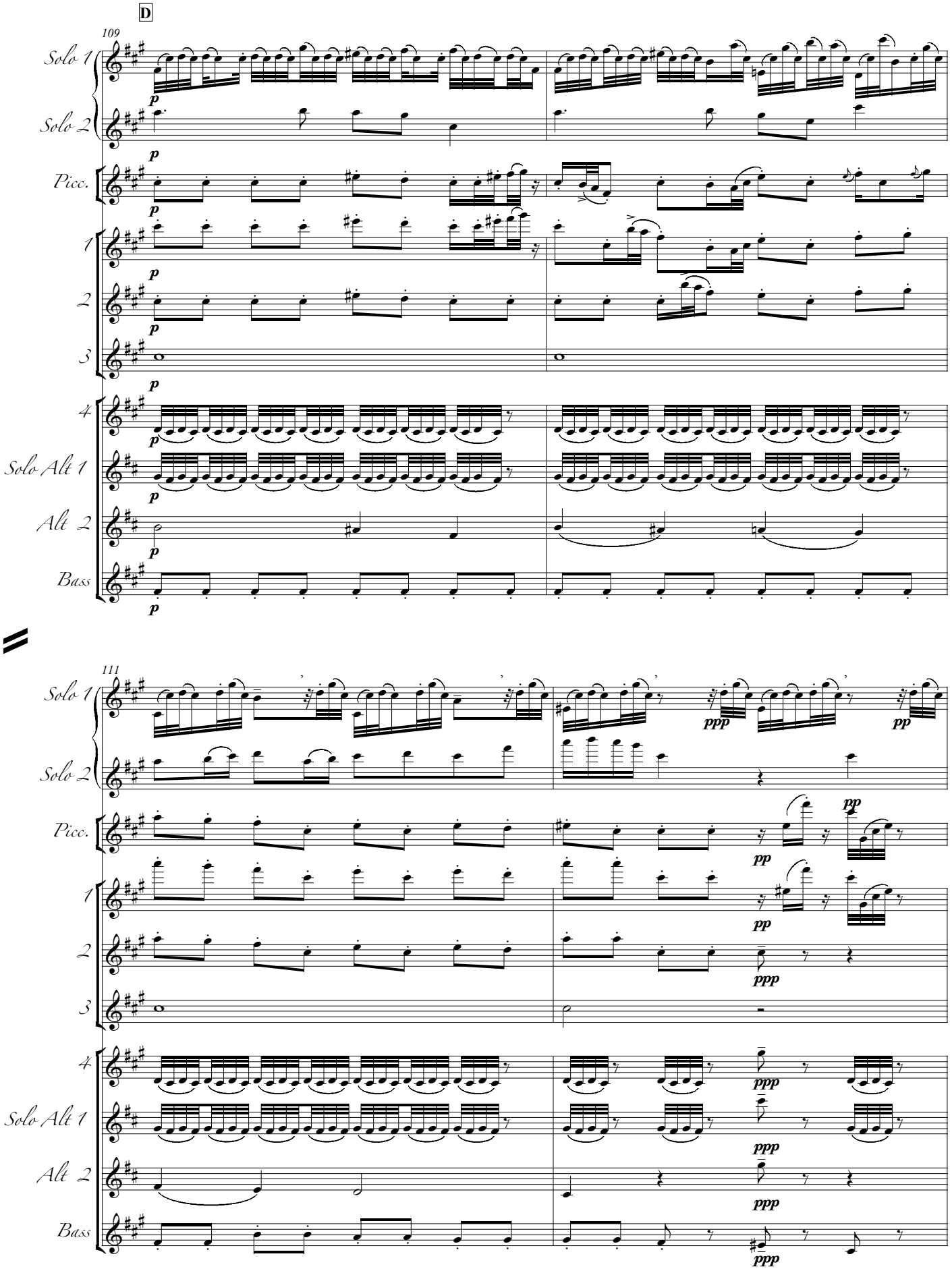

99
Solo 1
Solo 2
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass
pp

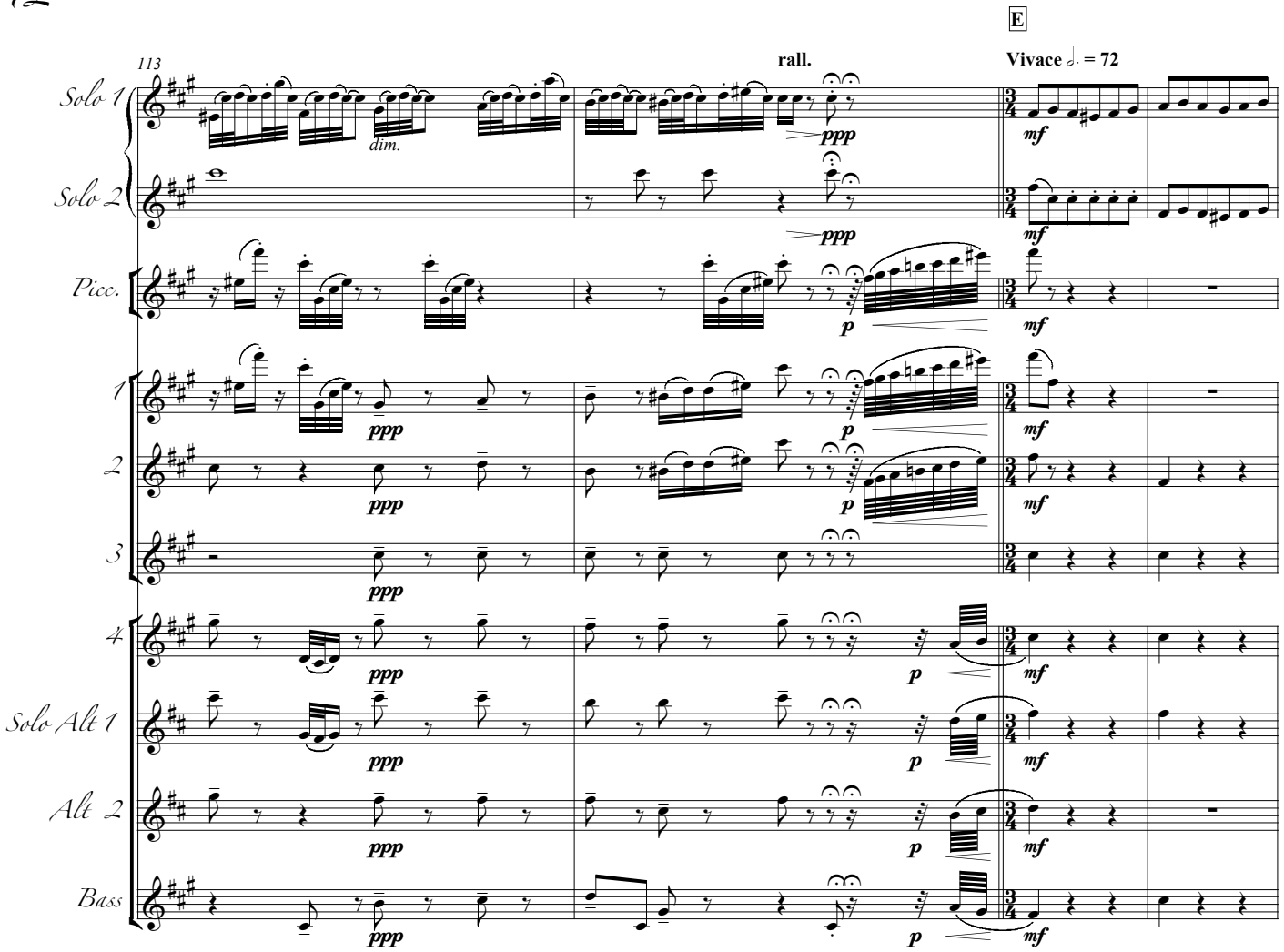

101
Solo 1
Solo 2
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass
pp
ppp

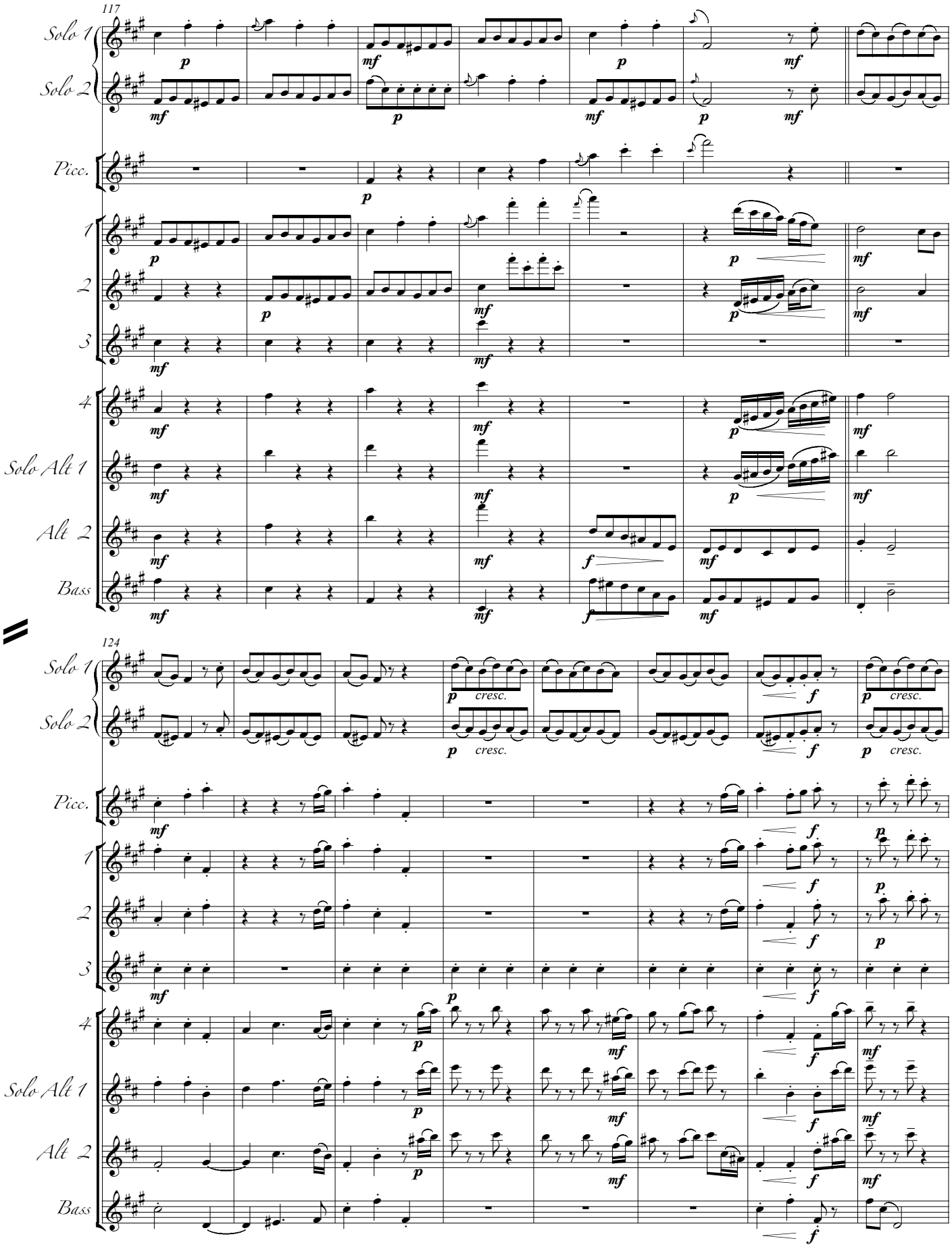

103
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass
pp

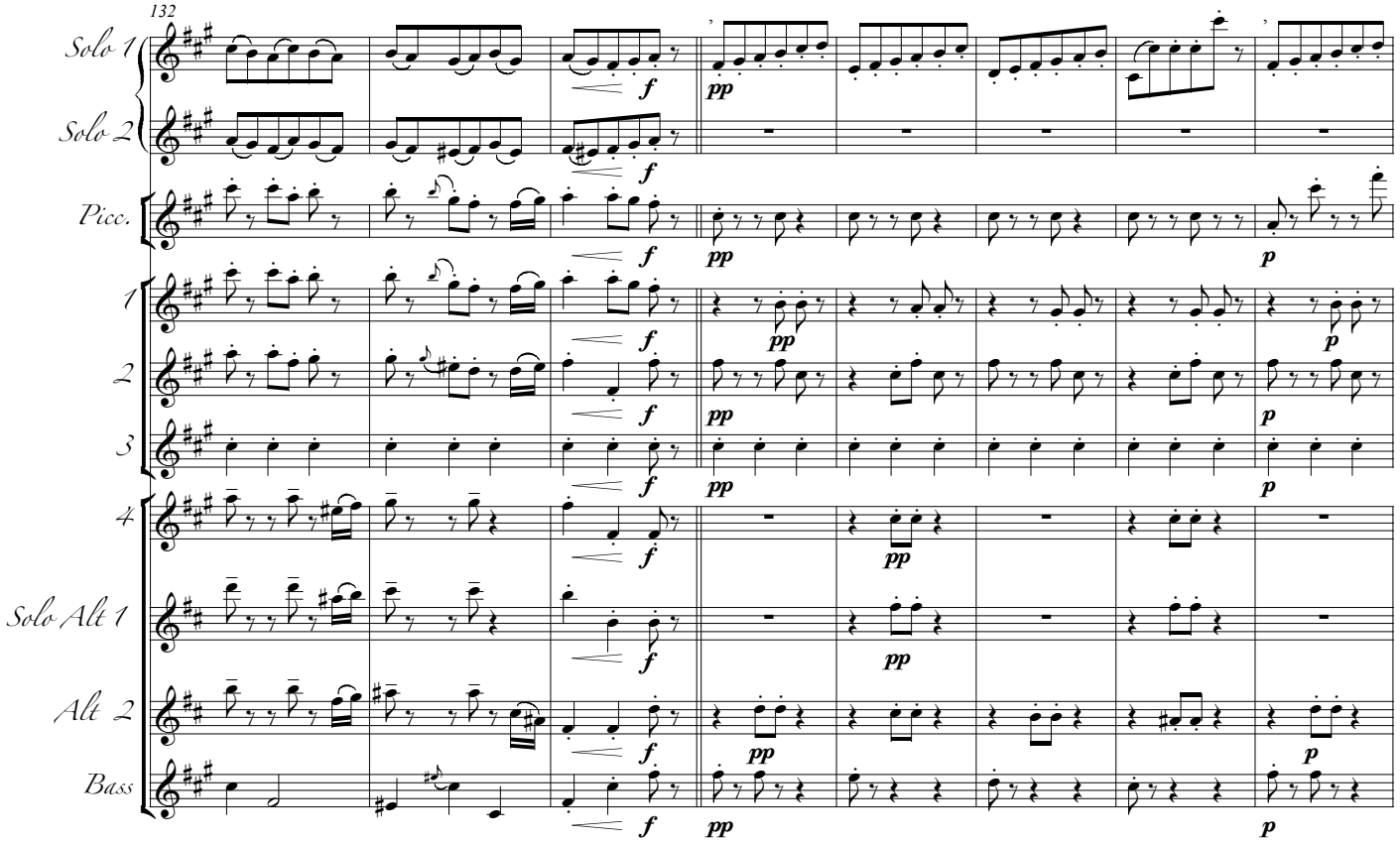

105
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
4
Solo Alt 1
Bass
mp

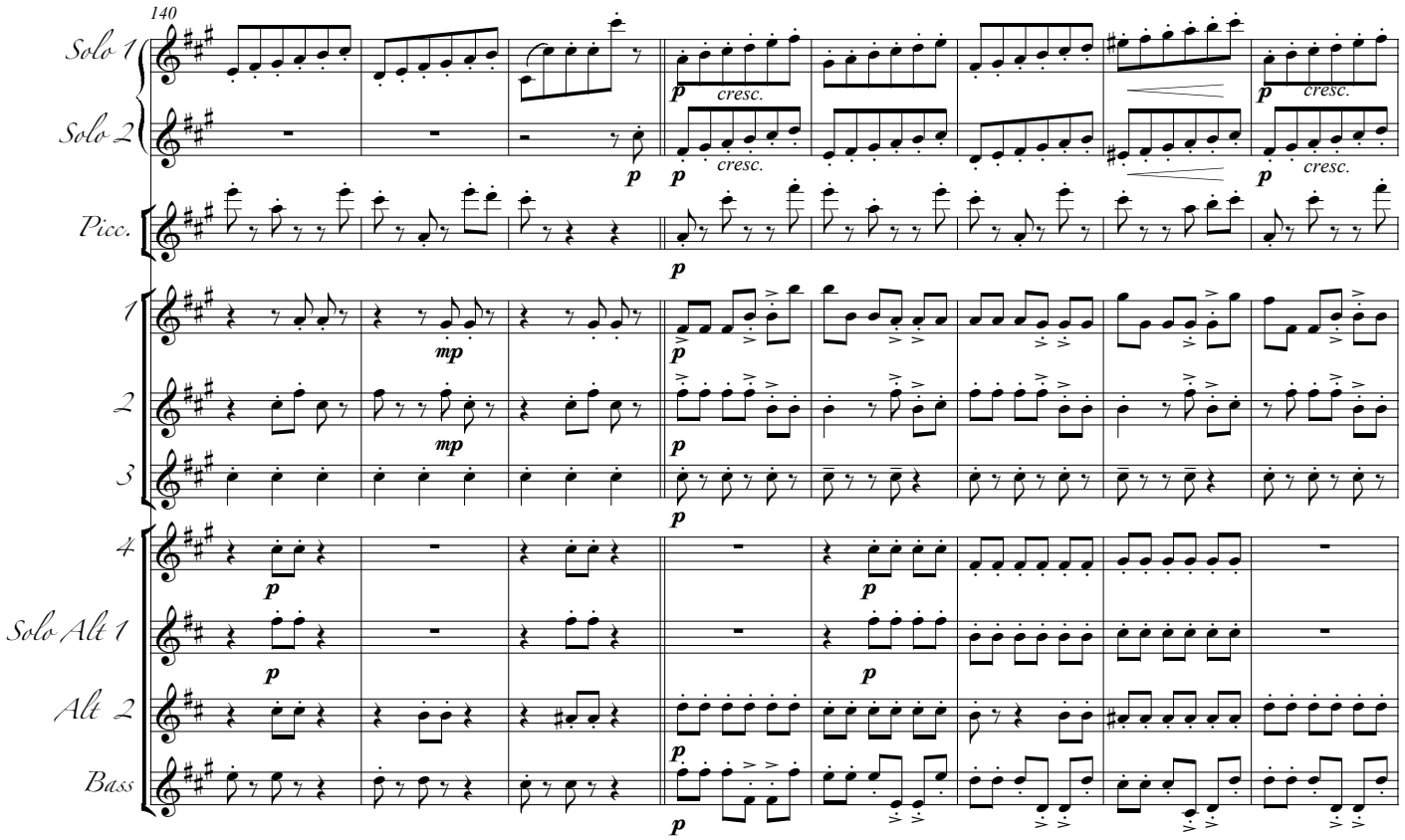

107
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
2
Alt 2
Bass
mp

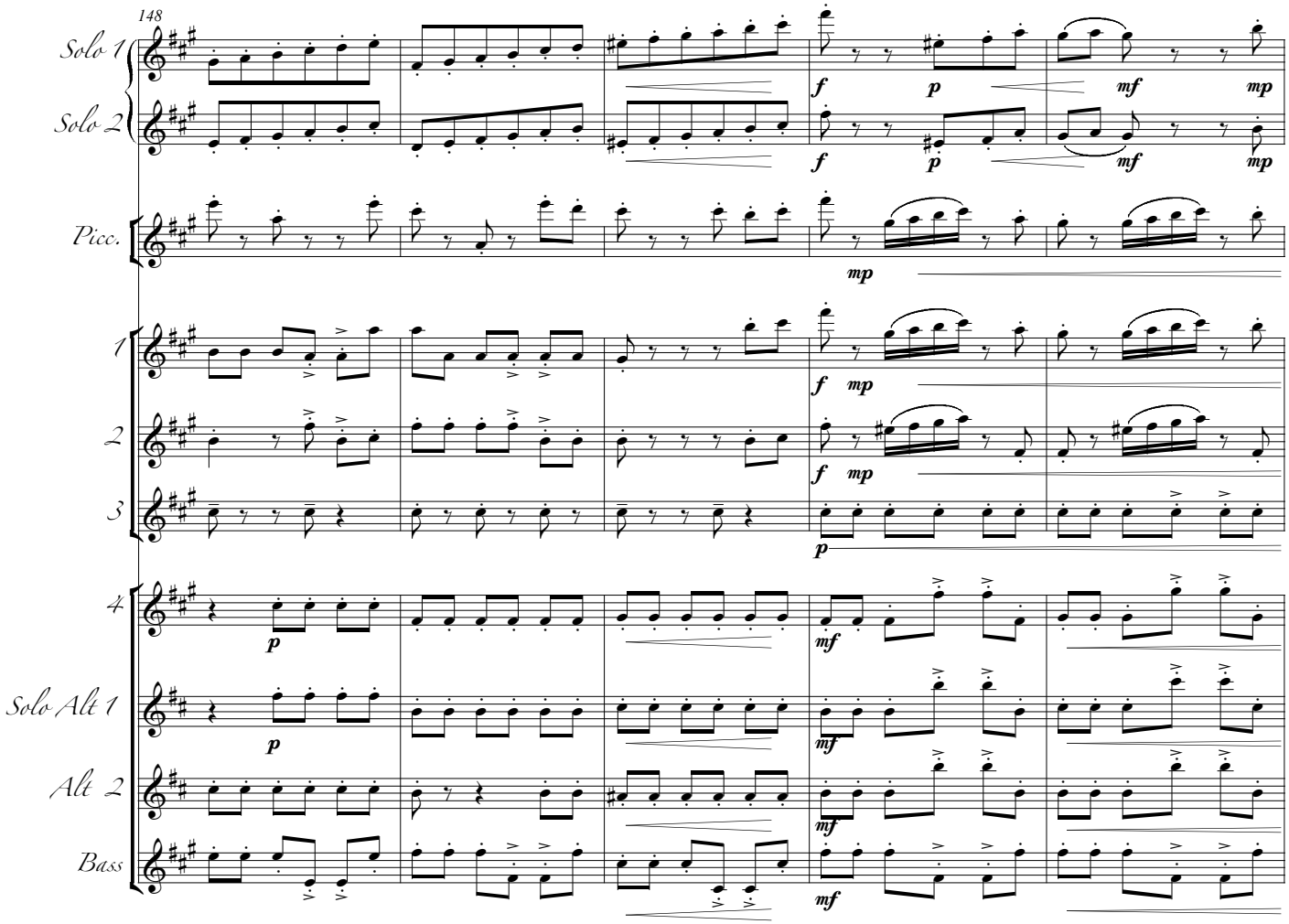

D
109
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass
111
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass

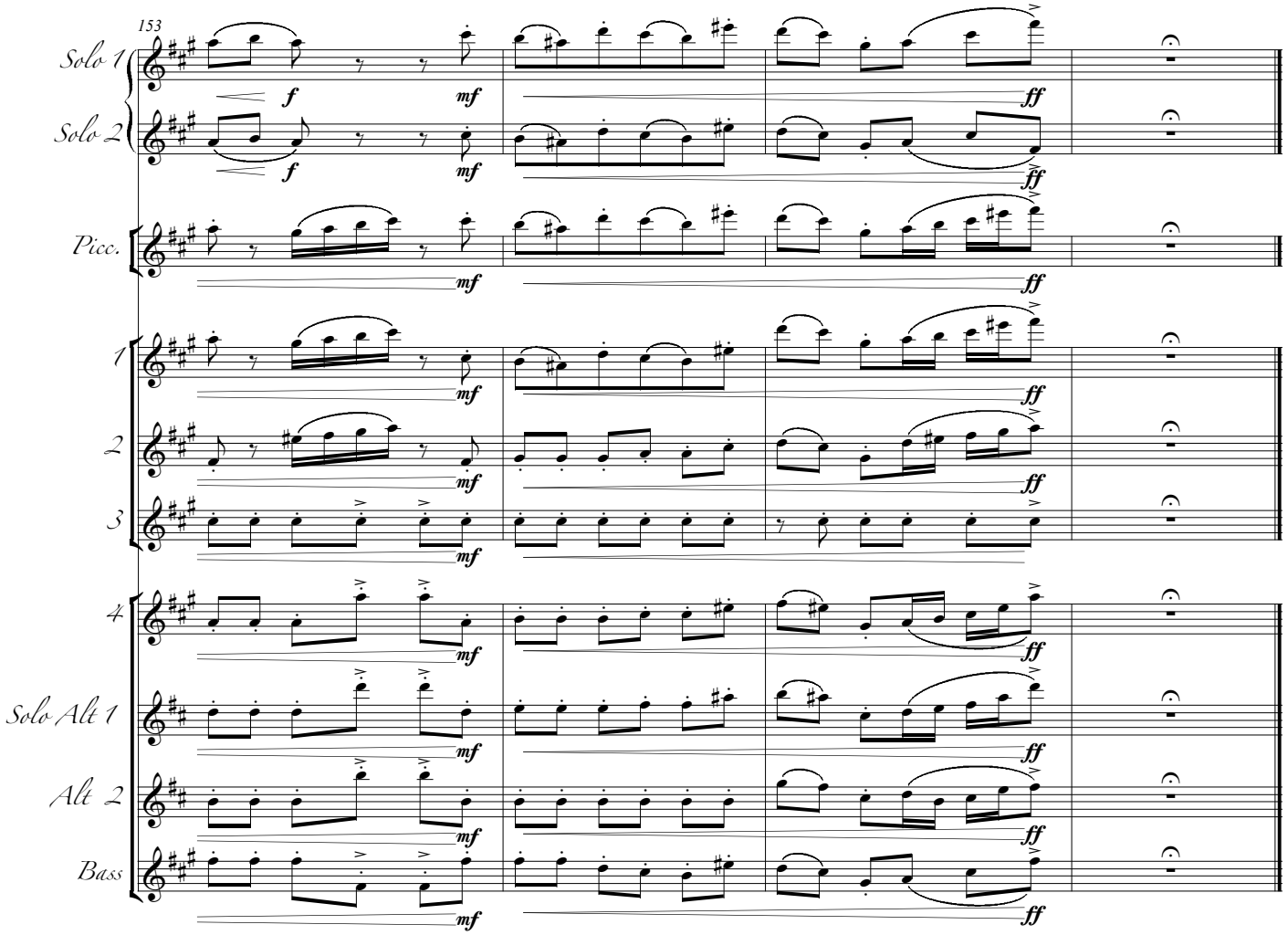

113
rall.
E
Vivace ♩. = 72
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass
dim.
ppp
p
mf


117
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass
124
cresc.


132
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass
f
pp
p


140
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass
p
mp
cresc.


148
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass


153
Solo 1
Solo 2
Picc.
1
2
3
4
Solo Alt 1
Alt 2
Bass
f
mf
ff

Transit Of Venus

for flute(s)

Programme Notes

The series of Transit Of Venus pieces were conceived in a pedagogical sense at an astronomical time. While waiting for pupils in a cold reverberant school practice room as the planet Venus was crossing the face of the Sun. Making use of this time by doing some practice using an exercise, (see **Transit Exercise**) introduced to me by *Professor David Cubbin*, my inspirational flute teacher in Adelaide from 1967 to 1970. I remembered a lesson in which after listening to my playing of a *Marcel Moÿse* Sonorité exercise, he focussed my attention on a particular range of the flute's timbre, namely the 'natural' colour change that occurs when pivoting between 2 pitches the 'open' c# and the adjacent 'closed' d.
As an aim of this my practice, I used this simple Sonorité exercise is to try to match the timbre of c# to the adjacent d, and vice versa, while at the same time building resonant capacity and regular breath control. After doing this exercise for many minutes, I began to improvise phrases on the length of my breath, breaking of at intervals to write down and compose **Transit Of Venus**, as a study for solo flute.

I had in mind some phrases of bansuri master *Pandit Hari Prasad Chaurasia* who I had heard in an all night Raga concert in Edinburgh, particularly the phrases which contain leaps during the c# to d oscillations to other notes to create the illusion of more than one part, as in the solo violin *3 Sonatas & 3 Partitas* by *Johann Sebastian Bach* (1685-1750). The title was chosen as the 2004 Transit Of Venus took place, this is when the planet Venus crosses the face of the sun. The opening section is an energetic waltz melody, this reminded me that a visit of Hailey's Comet was celebrated in a composition by the the television astronomer and virtuoso xylophone soloist Patrick Moore, who wrote a concert waltz for xylophone and orchestra.

Later I found there were other interesting associations arising from the title.

- The term 'Transit Of Venus' is used in astrology as an attribute of a persons horoscope.
- In December 2004 I travelled to New Zealand to visit my family, in 1769 *James Cook* travelled to Tahiti to observe Transit Of Venus, he then sailed on exploring the South Seas and discovered New Zealand and Australia.

Transit Of Venus 2 for flute duet was composed a few days after the solo piece, in order to play with flautist *Karen Thornton* who liked the solo study and suggested we each have our own part to play. It takes quite a bit of energy and breath control to keep steady, we also find it easier to play from memory.

I then made **Transit Of Venus 3** by adding a spacious introduction and expanding some phrases. Scored for two solo flutes and flute choir comprising piccolo, 4 flutes, 2 alto flutes and bass flute. This 3rd piece completes a series of pieces with a unifying theme suitable for a 'flute convention' or similar. From the solo study to the duet who then 'guest' in the 3rd piece with flute choir.

Level of Difficulty

The solo parts require smooth facility in the key of F# minor. Most of the phrases fit easily under the fingers on a Boehm flute. The 2nd flute part of **Transit Of Venus 2** may be played on a flute with a low B. Intermediate to Advanced players, e.g. Associated Board Grade 8 for the solo parts.

In **Transit Of Venus 3**, the flute choir parts are written for a choir comprising players of 'mixed' ability. The 3rd choir flute part uses only one note - 'open' c# and may be played by a Beginner with Intermediate reading skills. The solo alto flute 1 may also be played by 4th flute making it possible to play with only one alto flute and one bass.

Visit web pages: www.johnwesleybarker.co.uk